

QUEBEC'S 100+ DAYS 350,000 back student strike

By G. Dunkel

Quebec's university students have been waging a determined battle in the past four months to stop the provincial government from carrying through a 75 percent tuition hike.

This struggle is exemplary for all North America, because Quebec students would still be paying the lowest tuition in the U.S. and Canada — even if the tuition hike takes place. Their average debt is also among the lowest in Canada at \$13,300 per student. Thus their victory could light the way for all youth on the continent if it were widely publicized.

The student's demands go beyond stopping the increase. One of the largest student federations, CLASSE — the Broad Coalition of the Association for Labor-Student Solidarity — has clearly stated that its ultimate aim is free tuition. (bloquonslahausse.com)

The demonstration held in Montreal on May 25 is a good example of how determined the students are. Students faced torrential rain, hail, high winds, lightning and a tornado watch. Still hundreds of students and supporters gathered in Emelie-Gamelin Park at 9 p.m. and marched for three hours through downtown Montreal — a march police had forbidden. This was the 32nd consecutive nighttime demonstration in Montreal. (La Presse, May 25) CLASSE's slogan is "Every night, in the streets, until victory!"

'Partial strike' May 22; unions join fight against Law 78

But it is not just a few hardy militants in the streets. On May 22, the 100th day of the student strike, more than 300,000 came out at 2 p.m. in Montreal for another march challenging Special Law 78 and supporting the students' strike. Law 78 imposes heavy, onerous restrictions on student groups and unions.

Since it was during working hours on a weekday, the demonstration could be considered a partial strike. It was one of the largest demonstrations in Canadian history, which is notable since Quebec's population is slightly more than 8 million people.

Special Law 78 demands that organizers inform the cops where and when they want to march, stay away from colleges and universities, and accept responsibility and liability for any acts committed by anybody in an action they call. There are heavy fines for both leaders and members of the groups calling demonstrations that Law 78 makes "illegal."

The city of Montreal has also passed a law forbidding wearing masks or even ski goggles or big sun glasses during a demonstration.



Unions throughout Canada have responded vigorously to challenge Law 78. Labor unions based outside Quebec have sent more than \$36,000 to Quebec's student federations, and some unions sent delegations to the May 22 march.

James Turk, the executive director of the Canadian Association of University Teachers, which represents 66,000 teachers and other academic professionals across Canada, said his union is considering a contribution to the legal suit against Law 78.

"We don't want the main issue obscured, and that is the desire to have accessible postsecondary education," Turk told the Globe & Mail. "We've been really strong on that, and now we're looking at concrete ways we can be of assistance to the students financially." (May 22)

Two locals from the Canadian Union of Public Employees gave a total of \$30,000 to the Quebec

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New York City Pride, June 2011

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Providence youth protest racial profiling

By Bill Bateman
Providence, R.I.

On May 23, some 200 people, mainly youth, marched on Providence’s South Side to protest escalating racial profiling by police. They began at Central/Classical High School and walked to police headquarters. Next, the protest moved on to City Hall and other locations and ended up at the State House. There, speakers from community groups called for legislators to pass the Comprehensive Racial Profiling Prevention Act.

En route, the demonstrators paid tribute to those who have been abused or killed due to racial profiling, including Trayvon Martin.

Protesters opposed Mayor Angel Tavares’ appointment of the former head of the Rhode Island State Police as public safety commissioner, giving him authority over the city’s police and fire departments. March organizers and participants called for an end to the increasing police harassment



WW PHOTO: BILL BATEMAN

against working-class and poor communities, with city and state police targeting, searching and abusing people of color.

People are fed up and fighting back. Participants in the march were from a variety of organizations, including the Providence Student and Youth Movement (PrSYM), Direct Action for Rights and Equality (DARE), the RI Peoples’ Assembly, the Coalition against Racial Profiling, the Onleyville Neighborhood Association (ONA), Somos Todos Arizona, the Providence chapter of the NAACP and the Eastern Medicine Drum. □

TULSA, OKLA., 1921:

Justice continues to be denied

By Dolores Cox

May 31 is the 91st anniversary of the “Race Riot” tragedy in Tulsa, Okla. It “was almost left out of history, not documented, passed over, wiped out!” stated Rep. Maxine Waters, of the Congressional Black Caucus.

On that date in 1921, a rampage by white supremacists caused the destruction of the Greenwood Black neighborhood and the massacre of 300 people. Yet, the so-called race riot and its survivors were conveniently forgotten about for decades, the “best-kept secret” in Tulsa. City, state and federal officials as well as white residents denied it.

The racist siege caused ethnic cleansing of African Americans living in Tulsa’s segregated Greenwood section, known as “Black Wall Street” because of the community’s prosperity. Less than 57 years after their emancipation from slavery, African Americans had established self-sufficient social, political and economic institutions and systems. They owned their own homes, property and businesses.

On that day, Dick Rowland, 19-year-old, orphaned Black shoe shiner, was accused of sexually assaulting a white female elevator operator, when he stumbled and inadvertently touched her while trying to regain his footing. He was arrested and taken to jail. A white lynch mob gathered outside. Black men from Greenwood, even some World War I vets wearing their uniforms, tried to rescue the youth and were shot dead.

During the night, a racist mob, which included deputized vigilantes, KKK members and government officials, burglarized Black homes and businesses. They torched houses, destroying 1,200. Airplanes firebombed the buildings. Men, women and children were machine-gunned as they fled into the streets. Ambulances were prevented from reaching casualties. The Black population was outnumbered 10 to one, unable to defend themselves or protect their possessions or their property from their well-armed attackers.

Survivors were rounded up and herded by the National Guard into the Convention Hall and two other venues where they were treated as criminals. The massacre left 10,000 Black residents homeless and displaced. They were forced out of town and left destitute, with no right of return. White residents confiscated the land and any property they didn’t destroy.

Using 1921 figures, an estimated \$5 million was lost in Greenwood property, says Reginald Turner, attorney and

documentary producer of “Before They Die: The Road to Reparations for the 1921 Tulsa Race Riot Survivors.” Using 2012 figures, Greenwood businesses lost an estimated \$50 million in oil sales. Heirs and descendants lost their inheritances of all their families achieved and acquired. Oklahoma state legislators have shown no interest in supporting the survivors.

White supremacy was the law of the land in 1921, and it remains so. City, state and federal officials deliberately covered up the assault until 2001, when concealed evidence surfaced in a report.

Justice & reparations demanded for survivors

Harvard Law Professor Charles J. Ogletree filed a lawsuit in 2003 calling for justice and reparations for the surviving victims. A “One Day in May” campaign was established and continues. White perpetrators of the terrorism have been exonerated, and Black victims blamed. Claims for damages have been dismissed or ignored. The U.S. Supreme Court refused to hear an appeal.

A waiting game is being played out regarding justice and reparations for the remaining 45 or so survivors. Sadly, Otis Clark, the oldest known survivor, just died at age 109 in Seattle. He had been a tireless fighter in the quest for justice. Clark’s stepfather’s body was never found after the attack. For years afterwards, Clark’s family and others lived in shanties and tents. He then moved to California and later Dallas and Seattle.

On this year’s anniversary, there will be a meeting in Washington, D.C., with the Black Congressional Caucus and a public hearing on Resolution HR5593. On May 8, the bill was forwarded to the House Judicial Committee.

The late Harvard Law Professor and historian Dr. John Hope Franklin introduced this bill, which is officially called the “John Hope Franklin Tulsa-Greenwood Race Riot Claims Accountability Act of 2012.” His father was in Greenwood during the “riot” and was detained in the Convention Hall. He had planned to move his family to Tulsa.

Survivors who are physically able are expected to attend the hearing. Among them are Dr. Olivia Hooker, 96, and 95-year-old Wes Young. They will testify before Congress and lobby for passage of the resolution, which will provide redress, restitution, compensation and closure.

Given the racism in this system, will any of the survivors receive justice before they die? □

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NAACP endorses marriage equality

Excerpts are from a May 20 press release.

The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People today [May 19] released a resolution supporting marriage equality. At a meeting of the 103-year-old civil rights group's board of directors [in Miami, Fla.], the organization voted to support marriage equality as a continuation of its historic commitment to equal protection under the law.

"The mission of the NAACP has always been to ensure the political, social and economic equality of all people," said Roslyn M. Brock, Chairman of the Board of Directors of the NAACP. "We have and will oppose efforts to codify discrimination into law."

"Civil marriage is a civil right and a matter of civil

law. The NAACP's support for marriage equality is deeply rooted in the Fourteenth Amendment of the United States Constitution and equal protection of all people," said Benjamin Todd Jealous, President and CEO of the NAACP.

The NAACP has addressed civil rights with regard to marriage since *Loving v. Virginia* declared anti-miscegenation laws unconstitutional in 1967. In recent years the NAACP has taken public positions against state and federal efforts to ban the rights and privileges for LGBT citizens, including strong opposition to Proposition 8 in California, the Defense of Marriage Act, and most recently, North Carolina's Amendment 1, which changed the state constitution to prohibit same sex marriage.

The resolution reads in part:

The NAACP Constitution affirmatively states our objective to ensure the "political, educational, social and economic equality" of all people. Therefore, the NAACP has opposed and will continue to oppose any national, state, local policy or legislative initiative that seeks to codify discrimination or hatred into the law or to remove the Constitutional rights of LGBT citizens. We support marriage equality consistent with equal protection under the law provided under the Fourteenth Amendment of the United States Constitution. Further, we strongly affirm the religious freedoms of all people as protected by the First Amendment.

The NAACP is the oldest and largest civil rights organization in the U.S.

Obama and LGBTQ liberation

LeiLani Dowell, a Workers World newspaper managing editor and activist in the lesbian/gay/bi/trans/queer movement, gave this talk at a WW Forum on May 18.

On May 9, President Obama held an interview with Robin Roberts [ABC-TV host], in which he expressed his "evolved" personal belief that same-sex couples should be allowed to marry.

We should recognize the tremendous work that went into that mere statement — not an official decree, not an executive order. But just the statement of the president of the United States' personal belief came from the work of lesbian/gay/bi/trans/queer people, activists and allies to push for LGBTQ rights and liberation. We have to acknowledge that basic fact, which has been completely ignored in the corporate media.

When I heard the news about Obama's statement, I had a cynical reaction to it — which is understandable. The man is a capitalist politician. For capitalist politicians, election years are all about the game: You say what you think will get you the most votes. So, I thought, he's doing this for the LGBTQ vote.

But my partner said, "Isn't it interesting that that's what he thinks will get him votes?" And he is absolutely right. It speaks to the changing consciousness and acceptance in U.S. society around LGBTQ rights and ending anti-LGTBQ bigotry, which have only come about through decades of struggle by LGBTQ people and their allies.

It is very significant that it's Obama — the country's first Black president — who was the first president to come out in support of same-sex marriage. Disunity is a major tool in the capitalists' tool belt; they're always trying to tell us not to like so and so, because so and so isn't like you. If they're successful, you and I waste our precious time fighting each other when we should be fighting them.

The corporate media, the capitalists, try to divide LGBTQ people and people of color — who would be natural allies otherwise. We're told that the Black community and the LGBTQ community are at odds. This ignores the fact that many of us in the LGBTQ community are African American, and so are our friends and family. They even tell us that African countries are anti-LGBTQ — as if LGBTQ people faced no state and other oppression here in the U.S.

We've raised the case of CeCe McDonald here before, but it's a perfect example: A Black trans woman is thrown in jail for defending herself and her queer people of color friends against racist bigots. (See articles at workers.org)

Here is one example of how the media will twist the struggle for LGBTQ rights

in Africa. You may have heard about how Uganda tried to get legislation passed that called for the execution of gay people. What's not mentioned in the press is that Scott Lively, a white bigot from the U.S., started that mess. He organized a group of right-wing, fundamentalist preachers to go to Uganda and influence the parliament there to propose the legislation.

Thanks to the LGBTQ movement in Uganda, with support from LGBTQ movements worldwide, the legislation was defeated. We should note that South Africa is one of the 10 countries in which same-sex marriage is currently legal on a national level. The U.S., of course, isn't on that list.

Obama's statement as a Black president is significant. Some analysts even suggest that Black people may be swayed in favor of same-sex marriage because of Obama's support. That's okay.

Let's reflect on what same-sex marriage means. Vice President Joe Biden made this statement a few days before Obama's, which some think forced Obama's hand on the issue: "What this is is a simple proposition: Who do you love? And will you be loyal to the person you love?" If that were all it was, who cares if the state sanctions it? We don't believe in the capitalist state's legitimacy anyway.

But the right to marry is much more than that. Here are some of the benefits that are bestowed on married couples, from freedomtomarry.org.

- Marriage enables spouses to visit each other in the hospital; to make each other's emergency medical decisions; to share a family health plan; and to take medical leave to care for a sick spouse or child
- Governments, banks, credit card companies and other financial institutions will consider both spouses' incomes, assets, or debts in ... taxes, credit, loans, inheritance, divorce settlements, and eligibility for public housing, Medicaid, or Social Security benefits
- It enables spouses to be joint parents in making school or medical decisions, applying for passports, or being eligible for visitation rights and child support obligations
- It enables a survivor to make funeral arrangements, inscribe an epitaph, inherit a lease, file wrongful death claims, take bereavement leave and pass on property.

Even in states where same-sex marriage has been legalized, like in New York, federal benefits of marriage are still denied to married same-sex couples, such as in filing federal income taxes.

While it is notable that Obama took this bold step in openly supporting same-sex marriage, he made it clear that he and Washington would not do much to secure that right for LGBTQ people. After he said



WW PHOTO: JOHN CATALINOTTO

LeiLani Dowell speaking on sexual oppression at the forum commemorating Karl Marx's birthday, May 5.

that it was his personal belief that same-sex couples should be allowed to marry, Obama quickly added, "I continue to believe that this is an issue that is going to be worked out at the local level, because historically this has not been a federal issue." (ABC News, May 9)

Obama's remarks came just one day after North Carolina passed a constitutional amendment defining marriage as solely between a man and a woman, making it the 30th state to ban same-sex marriage. One reporter pointed out that it's an inherent contradiction to call something a right — which Obama said a few days later, when he called same-sex marriage an example of "expanding rights" — and then say the states can do what they want about that right; they can decide who has and doesn't have that right.

It took a Supreme Court ruling to overturn the laws against marriage between whites and people of color. In 1967, the Supreme Court ruled, in *Loving v. Virginia*, that the state's anti-miscegenation laws were unconstitutional, laying the basis for the nullification of all race-based marriage legislation in the U.S.

Rep. James Clyburn of South Carolina, the third-ranking House Democrat, and an active organizer during the Civil Rights Movement, compared the debate on same-sex marriage to the debate in his lifetime over interracial marriage. Clyburn said: "I will remind you that in my lifetime, it was illegal in some states — this state, one of them — for Black and white couples to get married. ... We have seen [that] many churches that call themselves fundamentalist and Christian teach a theological tolerance of slavery and servitude." (Washington Post, May 14)

What a contrast to Obama, who made sure to suggest that "many" opposed to same-sex marriage weren't "coming at it from a mean-spirited perspective." But the bigots are the ones using it to foment attacks against LGBTQ people.

Clyburn continued: "There are contradictions based in the Scripture that we all have to work our way through, and sometimes it takes the federal government to step into the breach in order to resolve many of these issues. It certainly did that through the courts with the marriage question, and it also did the same thing when it comes to whether people of color have got the same rights that white people have."

That is coming from a man who was raised as a fundamentalist Christian, who said he had to work through that baggage to arrive at the correct position on same-sex marriage.

The press reported today [May 18] on another statement, which was made by The Rev. Otis Moss III, supporting Obama's same-sex marriage position. Moss, the head of Obama's former church, gave it to his congregation during his Sunday [May 13] sermon. It justified the support along several lines. One, he said, is that the question that should be posed is, "Should all Americans have the same civil rights? ... There is a difference between rights [spelled r-i-g-h-t-s] and rites [spelled r-i-t-e-s]." (Chicago Tribune, May 17)

Then he stated: "The institution of marriage is not under attack as a result of the president's words. Marriage was under attack years ago by men who viewed women as property and children as trophies of sexual prowess." We might say that's what the patriarchal system of marriage was set up to do, but it's still interesting that he put it into that context.

Even more interesting, Moss said: "Marriage is under attack by low wages, high incarceration, unfair tax policy, unemployment and lack of education. Gay and lesbian citizens did not cause the economic crash, foreclosures and attack upon health care. Poor underfunded schools were not created because people desire equal protection under the law. We have much work to do as a community."

This represents a changing consciousness, even more than Obama's statement. That last quote is indicative of another shift in consciousness, more than just LGBTQ rights. It's the consciousness of who the proper enemy is, what the real issues are.

I'd like to end where I began. That's with the struggle of people on the ground fighting for their own liberation and in solidarity with the liberation of others. The anti-miscegenation laws may have been defeated in the Supreme Court, but the Supreme Court had the weight of the whole Civil Rights Movement on its back.

The same thing is true in the winning of every right, from same-sex marriage and beyond. It will be the continued struggles of LGBTQ people and their allies that will win their true and full liberation. □

‘Tired of being treated like animals’

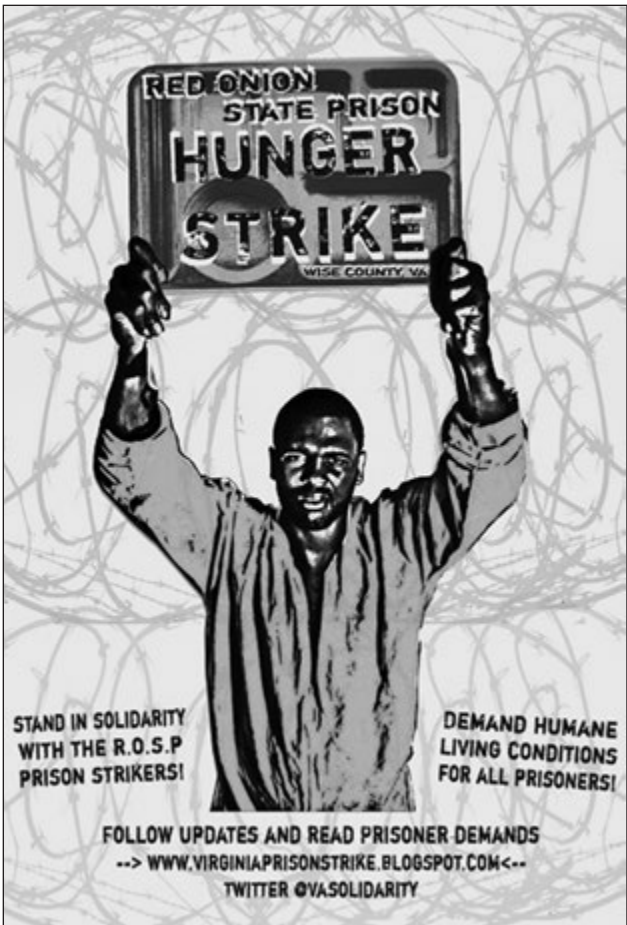
Virginia prisoners go on hunger strike

By Monica Moorehead

On May 22, close to 50 prisoners at Red Onion State Prison, in Wise County, Va., in at least two segregation pods, began a hunger strike protesting inhumane conditions and ongoing abuses by prison staff. For the men participating in the strike, this is their only recourse to get Red Onion warden, Randy Mathena, to officially recognize their grievances and make immediate changes to food, sanitation and basic living conditions at the prison. ROSP, built on a mountain 400 miles from Richmond, is considered the most isolated prison within the Virginia Department of Corrections. A statement from one of the strikers reads, “We’re tired of being treated like animals. There are only two classes at this prison: the oppressor and the oppressed. We, the oppressed, despite divisions of sexual preference, gang affiliation, race and religion, are coming together. We are rival gang members but now are united as revolutionaries.”

Go to the Virginia prison strike blog at <http://tinyurl.com/875ylnl> to send letters of solidarity for the prisoners and <http://tinyurl.com/7r8hlsa> to sign a petition to support their demands. Listed below are the prisoners’ 10 demands.

1. We demand fully cooked food, and access to a better quality of fresh fruit and vegetables. In addition, we demand increased portions on our trays, which allow us to meet our basic nutritional needs as defined by VDOC regulations.
2. We demand that every prisoner at ROSP have unrestricted access to complaint and grievance forms and other paperwork we may request.
3. We demand better communication between prisoners and higher-ranking guards. Presently, higher-ranking guards invariably take the lower-ranking guards’ side in disputes between guards and prisoners, forcing the prisoner to act out in order to be heard. We demand that higher-ranking guards take prisoner complaints and grievances into consideration without prejudice.



4. We demand an end to torture in the form of indefinite segregation through the implementation of a fair and transparent process whereby prisoners can earn the right to be released from segregation. We demand that prison officials completely adhere to the security point system, ensuring that prisoners are transferred to institutions that correspond with their particular security level.
5. We demand the right to an adequate standard of living, including access to quality materials that we may

- use to clean our own cells. Presently, we are forced to clean our entire cell, including the inside of our toilets, with a single sponge and our bare hands. This is unsanitary and promotes the spread of disease-carrying bacteria.
6. We demand the right to have third party neutral observers visit and document the condition of the prisons to ensure an end to the corruption amongst prison officials and widespread human rights abuses of prisoners. Internal Affairs and Prison Administrator’s monitoring of prison conditions have not alleviated the dangerous circumstances we are living under while in custody of the state, which include, but are not limited to: the threat of undue physical aggression by guards, sexual abuse and retaliatory measures, which violate prison policies and our human rights.
 7. We demand to be informed of any and all changes to VDOC/IOP [Internal Operating Procedure] policies as soon as these changes are made.
 8. We demand the right to adequate medical care. Our right to medical care is guaranteed under the Eighth Amendment of the Constitution, and thus the deliberate indifference of prison officials to our medical needs constitutes a violation of our constitutional rights. In particular, the toothpaste we are forced to purchase in the prison is a danger to our dental health and causes widespread gum disease and associated illnesses.
 9. We demand our right as enumerated through VDOC policy, to a monthly haircut. Presently, we have been denied haircuts for nearly three months. We also demand to have our razors changed out on a weekly basis. The current practice of changing out the razors every three weeks leaves prisoners exposed to the risk of dangerous infections and injury.
 10. We demand that there be no reprisals for any of the participants in the Hunger Strike. We are simply organizing in the interest of more humane living conditions. □

‘Occupy PGA’ tackles racism, dictatorial rule

By Abayomi Azikiwe
Editor, Pan-African News Wire
Benton Harbor, Mich.

Occupy the PGA was held May 23-27 to coincide with the Senior Professional Golfers’ Association Championship. People from as far away as New York City and Fresno, Calif., Vermont and Colorado in the U.S.; and Denmark, Mexico, Colombia and Costa Rica traveled to Benton Harbor, Mich., to protest alongside local organizers from that city and around the state of Michigan.

The PGA games, held in this city of 11,000 in southwest Michigan, are a national event with media coverage and advertising sponsorship by such leading corporations as Mercedes-Benz and KitchenAid.

In Benton Harbor, a city with high unemployment and poverty rates, the PGA was touted as providing a much-needed infusion of cash, tourism and positive public relations. Over the last several years the majority African-American community has been driven out and disenfranchised by the construction of a golf course, expensive homes and a revitalized beach in the lakefront area of the city. The Whirlpool Corporation based in Benton Harbor has been the driving force behind the gentrification. The major investor in this process is Harbor Shores Development, which took control of Jean Klock Park — a public site — and turned it into the Jack Nicklaus Golf Course.

Two participants in Occupy the PGA, Mary M. Morgan and Jan Griesinger, had been involved in a demonstration at



WW PHOTO: ABAYOMI AZIKIWE

the PGA tournament in August 1969 in Dayton, Ohio. Both women recounted how they disrupted the event due to the involvement of golfer Gary Player from then-racist South Africa.

Demands of Occupy the PGA

Occupy the PGA organizers issued a series of demands to the tournament’s sponsors, including the transfer of 25 percent of the profits from the games to Benton Harbor residents. These demands were designed both as a rallying point for the people of Benton Harbor and also to expose the plight of the residents to a broader national and international audience.

Occupy the PGA also demanded public acknowledgment at the tournament of the “theft of public park land for private profit.” The group pointed out that the takeover of park land represented the

“complete undermining of democratic structures via the installment of the Emergency Financial Manager [now Emergency Manager] in Benton Harbor in December 2010.” (press release, May 9)

According to the press release, “Accompanying the demand letter is a lengthy summation of community grievances against the Harbor Shores Development, ranging from the taking of the park land to unfulfilled promises of significant jobs and tax revenue for Benton Harbor residents. The packet ... analyzes the failure of state and federal agencies to protect the public interest, the unpermitted use of public water resources by the private developers, and the origin of the Emergency Manager Bill [Public Act 4].”

The Rev. Edward Pinkney and Dorothy Pinkney, leaders of the local NAACP Chapter and the Black Autonomy Net-

work of Community Organizers, view the tournament as an affront to the largely working-class and poor city. They questioned the benefits this project would bring to the jobless and impoverished residents, who are being systematically removed from the city.

The Rev. Pinkney told the press assembled for the demonstrations, “Benton Harbor continues to be a city under siege. The mishandling of public trust couldn’t be more massive, unjust, inhumane and unconstitutional. The Senior PGA needs to hear our voice. It’s time to stand up and fight for what’s right.”

The major event of the five days of activity was a “Death March” through the city to the grounds outside the Jack Nicklaus Golf Course. Participants gathered on May 26 outside Benton Harbor City Hall. After a brief rally, people lined up in single file behind a mock coffin representing the deadly policies of the state of Michigan, Whirlpool, Harbor Shores and the emergency manager of Benton Harbor.

During the march through downtown, the toll of the world economic crisis on this former industrial city could be seen. Blocks of closed businesses and abandoned homes were more the norm than active storefronts and viable dwellings. Whirlpool, the major employer in the region for many years, has largely been idled, with most of its production outsourced and its investments diversified into other sectors of the economy.

Nonetheless, when the marchers got closer to the Harbor Shores Development they saw new homes, refurbished proper-

CALIFORNIA

Bay Area ferry workers strike

Chanting “No contract, no work!” Inlandboatmen’s Union (IBU) ferry workers went on strike May 26. The picketers stopped the departure of three scheduled ferries from Larkspur, Calif., to San Francisco.

Strikers demanded compensation for the increased duties that were assigned to terminal workers after the district eliminated ticket seller positions; a limit on the number of bicycles allowed on each ferry; break rooms for the deckhands; and maintenance needed to reduce unsanitary conditions on some of the older ferries.

The workers, who did not have a contract for most of the year, also went on strike for one shift on May Day, May 1.

Since then, the negotiating team has accepted a proposed master contract, but each local has the right to strike over their own particular issues. The IBU is one of 14 unions associated with the Golden Gate Bridge, Highway and Transportation District.

Gov. Jerry Brown issued a statement saying he was appointing a three-member panel to investigate the strike, as it had created “a significant disruption to public transportation services and endangered the public’s health, safety and welfare.” (Associated Press, May 27) The strike was held on a Saturday, the day before celebrations in honor of the 75th anniversary of the Golden Gate Bridge.

— Report and photo by Terri Kay



JUNE 6 WISCONSIN:

‘Keep it in the streets’

By Bryan G. Pfeifer
Milwaukee

Poor and working people across Wisconsin are mobilizing statewide for a historic June 5 gubernatorial recall election. Gov. Scott Walker is being challenged by Democratic candidate Tom Barrett, while Lieutenant Gov. Rebecca Kleefisch is being challenged by Mahlon Mitchell, the African-American president of the Wisconsin Firefighters Association.

At the same time, people’s fighters from Occupy Wall Street, unions and independent organizations are organizing “Keep

It in the Streets” actions to take place in cities statewide on June 6. (occupywi.org) For example, Occupy Milwaukee is sponsoring a rally at Pier Marquette Park in Milwaukee at 5 p.m., followed by a march to the banking district.

The June 6 call reads: “After voting on June 5 we have to make our voices heard in order to hold our governor accountable. Occupy Milwaukee, community allies and labor unions will march on June 6 to make the following demands of our governor: Repeal union-busting Act 10 — hands off unions and collective bargaining; no cuts to education or Badger Care [Wisconsin’s



Feb. 15, 2011, state Capitol, Madison, Wis.

WW PHOTO: BRYAN G. PFEIFER

low-income health care program]; restore the Equal Pay Act — end workplace discrimination; tax the 1% — hold the bankers and the 1% accountable for their economic crisis; and stop the cuts to working and oppressed people.”

Sponsoring organizations such as the Wisconsin Bail Out the People Movement will raise other issues as well, including demands for a federal jobs program and a moratorium on foreclosures and evictions.

Direct class struggle: the way forward

“The recall struggle is a popular people’s struggle that we support, but it’s still within the confines of the capitalist electoral

arena,” said Tommy Cavanaugh, of Workers World Milwaukee. “The June 6 ‘Keep It in the Streets’ actions are critical because they turn attention to what we — the workers and oppressed — did in Madison where we occupied the Capitol for days. This is what has produced the progress we have made and has inspired the world. A return to the road of direct, anti-racist class struggle, including actions such as a general strike, is what’s needed.”

Continued Cavanaugh: “One of the central questions regarding the way forward in Wisconsin is: Will the masses

Continued on page 10

in Benton Harbor

ties and the new golf course. The beach, where the march ended, had a new shed, benches and reconstructed embankments.

Heavy police harassment

There had been a struggle over the march route between Occupy the PGA and the local authorities under the emergency management of Joe Harris. After negotiating the route, the police sought to change it just days before the events.

Police presence was heavy during the entire march. The rally on the beach was monitored by city and county cops.

On May 25, the Rev. Pinkney led a group of 10 Occupy the PGA participants through the area near the Jack Nicklaus Golf Course. The group was stopped and surrounded by 15 cops, who forced them off the public sidewalk. The situation became heated when the group emphasized their right to proceed on the sidewalk. One person was given a ticket for supposedly sounding a bicycle horn in the park.

The Rev. Pinkney says he will file a lawsuit on the matter against Benton Harbor Police Chief Roger Lange, the Benton Harbor Police Department, the PGA, Whirlpool and KitchenAid.

Benton Harbor: a legacy of struggle

Benton Harbor is a microcosm of the broader crisis of the cities in the present period. A one-time industrial hub for assembly-line production and shipping of household appliances, the city has fallen on hard times as a result of capitalist overproduction and racist gentrification.

In 1966, the city was the scene of an urban rebellion. The following year Detroit

had its rebellion, which was the largest in U.S. history at the time.

Benton Harbor exploded again in 2003 when police chased a young African-American motorcyclist to his death in a crash. The city was occupied for four days by the state police in an attempt to quell the rebellion.

The Rev. Pinkney, BANCO and its supporters have been a thorn in the side of the city administration and its corporate handlers. Pinkney was arrested and indicted on trumped-up charges of voter fraud in 2006. His first trial ended in a hung jury. However, when Berrien County authorities tried him again, they gained a conviction, with a sentence of one year in jail and five years’ probation.

Later, while under house arrest, the Rev. Pinkney was charged with threatening a judge after he quoted biblical scripture in an article published in the Chicago-based People’s Tribune. He was given three-to-10 years in prison for probation violation.

After an international campaign demanding his release, a Michigan appeals court overturned the conviction. He recently completed his probationary period.

Benton Harbor was placed under emergency management in 2010. Public officials have no authority, while residents are overtaxed and left voiceless through official political channels.

However, events such as Occupy the PGA indicate that the struggle is far from over. The increasing state repression leaves the residents no alternative but to organize and mobilize in defense of their political and economic interests. □

Quebec student strike strong

Continued from page 1

student movement — an unusually large contribution for a union.

Students have wider, anti-austerity agenda

May 22 in Montreal was well covered in the Canadian press and got extensive coverage in the worldwide French media, with coverage on French TV channels. A special edition of Libération, one of the largest newspapers in France, was devoted to the issues raised by the Quebec students, which obviously go beyond the issue of tuition and are connected to opposition to the worldwide capitalist drive to impose austerity — an issue raised sharply during France’s recent presidential race.

But in the United States there has been no coverage of events in Quebec from the end of April to May 26 in any major newspaper, according to a search of the Lexis-Nexus database, with the exception of an op-ed May 24 in the New York Times focusing on Law 78 as a major violation of civil rights.

Student debt in the United States is over \$1 trillion, more than the total credit card debt. In New York, both the state university and the city university systems plan major hikes in tuition and fees levied against students.

An article published May 26 in Quebec’s major English language newspaper, the Montreal Gazette, quotes Bruce Hicks, political science professor at the English-language Concordia University, on the student struggle: “It’s about ideology, and a youthful desire to change the world.”

“Quebec students aren’t looking at the American model of education, which can be had on borrowed money. They’re looking at the European model, like Scandinavia, where not only is tuition free, but you get money for books and ancillary costs.” Hicks also emphasized Quebec’s history of militant unionism that is very much part of the social fabric.

Student federations intend to keep their protests against the tuition hike going until classes start in August — when they can restart the strike. □

Supporters rally for Alan Blueford

By Terri Kay

More than 100 supporters of justice for Alan Blueford rallied May 23 in front of the Alameda County district attorney’s office. They demand that the Oakland Police Department be held accountable for Blueford’s death and that the officer who killed him be charged with murder.

An 18-year-old Black youth, Blueford died as a result of three gun shots fired by an OPD officer, Miguel Masso. Blueford, who was preparing to graduate from Lakeview High School in Oakland, was standing on a street corner in East Oakland at midnight on May 6 when the police officer killed him.

The police department has changed its story at least four times as to why and how Blueford was shot. First, the OPD claimed that the cops saw three Black youths, who were possibly holding a “concealed weapon,” on a street corner. Then it said Blueford shot an officer in the stomach. Then the OPD stated that the officer shot himself in the foot.

OPD chief, Howard Jordan, called a town hall meeting at Acts Full Baptist Church in East Oakland on the night of May 23 to inform the community of the

“facts” surrounding the case. Protesters marched to the church from the Coliseum Bay Area Rapid Transit station. When they arrived, the meeting organizers explained that only questions written on cards would be answered, and that people couldn’t speak or ask questions directly.

Chief Jordan began the meeting by once again revising the OPD’s series of lies. This time he stated that the cops, en route to another call, noticed that the Black youths “appeared to be passing something around, either a gun or drugs.” It’s clear, though, that the youth were actually stopped for standing on a corner while being Black.

Then Jordan changed another previously stated “fact.” Up until then, the OPD had consistently said a gun was found 30 feet from Blueford’s body. Now Chief Jordan claimed that the gun was only 5 feet from his body.

The final insult was when Jordan stated that Blueford was “given CPR by an officer and then taken to the hospital within minutes.” It had been well-established that Blueford was left to bleed out on the street, while the cop was rushed to the hospital. Previous reports exposed that Blueford’s body was not removed from the



PHOTO: GINO PEPI

scene until four hours after he was shot.

The crowd in the packed hall was not taking these lies in silence. Several people, including Chris Morland of Occupy Oakland’s Tactical Action Committee, loudly challenged Chief Jordan. About 50 people in the audience stood and turned their backs on Jordan, with their fists in the air. Jordan couldn’t take these challenges and abruptly adjourned the town hall after only 40 minutes in session.

As the cops quickly tried to leave the hall, Morland, a Black youth himself, led the demonstrators in continuing to challenge the cops as they filed out of the building. Outside, the crowd unfurled a banner and chanted, “Justice for Alan Blueford!” Some cops suddenly appeared

in riot gear, but the crowd chanted at them to leave and they backed away.

The protesters then walked back several blocks to the Coliseum BART. As they were preparing to disperse, two OPD cars, with four cops in each car, suddenly rolled up. The police swooped out and grabbed Morland from the middle of the crowd, claiming he was being charged with assault on an officer. Despite protests from the crowd, Morland was kidnapped by the cops.

Two days later, Morland was finally arraigned in a courtroom packed with his supporters, to a misdemeanor charge of “disturbing the peace” and a bail of \$2,500. He wasn’t released until the early morning of May 26, three days after his arrest. □

HOUSTON

Cop’s acquittal sparks anger, action

By Gloria Rubac
Houston

“This is a very volatile situation,” said Nation of Islam minister, Robert Muhammad. “Either we’re going to get real justice in Houston, or no one can have any peace.”

It’s now 35 years after Houston’s notorious José Campos Torres case. At that time, cops had brutally beaten and then thrown a handcuffed Torres into a bayou, where he drowned. The cops in the Torres case were fined \$1.00.

This year, the racist Houston police have committed an act so brutal that Houstonians are again up in arms. In a misdemeanor trial which had individual questioning of jurors and lasted almost three weeks, a Houston cop was again let off for his racist crimes.

For many in Houston and particularly Black Houstonians, the not-guilty verdict reached on May 23 in the trial of former Houston Police Department officer, Andrew Blomberg, was yet another example of how the justice system fails the Black community. Blomberg and 10 other Houston policemen had stomped and kicked and brutalized an unarmed 15-year-old burglary suspect, Chad Holley, in March of 2010. Blomberg is white. The beating victim, Holley, is Black.

This attack was inadvertently caught on security video. Almost a year later, an employee turned it over to Black activist Quannell X after the worker discovered what was on the tape.

This May 23, State District judge, Ruben Guerrero, announced the all-white jury’s not-guilty decision. After this announcement, activists from the National Black United Front and the New Black

Panther Party erupted in anger and expletives in the hallway outside the courtroom. They accused prosecutors and the all-white jury — two women and four men — of racism.

The next day, May 17, at the Harris County Criminal Justice Center, there was an emergency demonstration, which began with dozens and swelled to almost 500 people, with anger and outrage evident as they marched and chanted: “No more all-white juries!” and “No justice, no peace!”

Anthony Tashaka Childress was brutally beaten and had six teeth knocked out by Houston cops earlier this year as he walked in his neighborhood. He told the rally, “They have sent a message to Black people, to all of us, that our lives aren’t worth a damn in this city, that my life, my son’s life means nothing to them.”

Quanell X said: “There is no way an all-white jury could provide justice in this case. That was not a jury of our peers, Chad’s peers or the city’s peers.”

Ballplayer brutalized

Robbie Tolan also spoke. He was an African-American minor league baseball player who was living with his parents in the upscale municipality of Bellaire in Houston. In 2010, Tolan had been shot by cops who were also acquitted. The police had ordered Tolan to lie down on the walkway to his front door and had physically forced his mother up against a garage door.

Tolan told the crowd that this racist brutality by cops must be stopped. He still has a bullet in his liver. The police had ended his baseball career.

“They are police officers and all they



WW PHOTO: GLORIA RUBAC

Police violence survivors Anthony Childress (speaking) and Juan Romero condemn the verdict.

have to say is ‘I fear for my life’ and that gives them a free pass,” said the younger Tolan’s father, Bobby Tolan, a former major league outfielder. “Our civil rights were violated.”

On May 18, three people who were at the Harris County district attorney’s office were arrested for allegedly impeding the entrance to her doorway. The three now face criminal trespassing charges, which carry a penalty of 180 days in jail and a \$2,000 fine. Those arrested were Krystal Muhammad, the Houston chair of the New Black Panther Party; Kofi Taharka, the national chair of the National Black United Front; and activist attorney Maria Elena Castellanos.

At an emergency Town Hall meeting at the S.H.A.P.E. Community Center on May 21, hundreds of people signed up for volunteer work on media, event planning, petitioning and other committees. Many took the mic and spoke about incidents they had experienced at the hands of the police. The next Town Hall will be May 29.

The meeting was organized and chaired

by the Black Justice Tuesday Coalition, which has demonstrated at either City Hall or the County Courthouse for 69 straight weeks, getting petitions signed to force a referendum on an independent police review board with subpoena power and funding to conduct research on police actions. Following Blomberg’s acquittal, more and more people have been signing petitions and also taking them to their families, churches and organizations.

The Houston police chief has already fired seven of the 12 cops involved in the beating. Three other cops still face charges for the pummeling of the youth. But the charge against the police officers is only a misdemeanor with a maximum sentence of one year in jail if convicted.

Black elected officials held a press conference May 25 and called the misdemeanor charges of “official repression” a slap on the wrist. They questioned why prosecutors had not persuaded a grand jury to charge the officers with felony assault.

U.S. Rep. Al Green met with the U.S. Justice Department in Washington, D.C.,

Carlos Montes trial nears

By Scott Scheffer
Los Angeles

Supporters of Carlos Montes, a longtime progressive activist targeted by the FBI, are calling for an intensified national solidarity campaign during the three weeks leading up to his June 20 trial in Los Angeles. The emergence of a previously unavailable witness in the case resulted in a postponement from the original May 15 trial date, and has increased the confidence of members of his defense committee.

Over the last several months, incredible numbers of people have already participated in his defense by showing up at pre-trial courtroom appearances in Los Angeles, flooding the District Attorney's office with phone calls from all across the U.S, signing petitions by the thousands, and handing out leaflets and displaying signs and banners at progressive meetings and demonstrations all over the country demanding that the charges be dropped.

Montes' history in the progressive movement began in the 1960s when he was a co-founder of the Brown Berets and a leader in the Chicano student movement. That history also includes years of Montes' progressive labor organizing and continues today with his role in the immigrant rights and anti-war movements.

Montes' name appeared on an FBI search warrant when they raided the office of the St. Paul, Minn., Anti-War Commit-

tee in 2010 and subpoenaed 23 progressive activists from the Midwest. Montes shares a history of activism with those who were subpoenaed, and so it wasn't surprising that he was also targeted. The 23 are all refusing to cooperate with a grand jury, as subpoenas have summoned them to do, and may face jail sentences for their refusal.

and asked for an investigation of Houston police conduct. Green told the dozens of media representatives at the press conference that there are over 255,000 Asians in Harris County, over 773,000 African Americans, and over 1,670,000 Latinos/as, yet not one person from these communities was identified as such on the Chad Holley jury. The county's total population is about 4.1 million.

Video helped publicize cops' brutality

Cindy Paten, a white employee at a storage lot was outraged by the contents of the surveillance video and gave it to Quanell X. The beating had occurred just outside the fence of the storage facility. Since that time, Paten has been fired and has lost her home and car.

Houston's ABC news affiliate describes the video, which has been seen by millions since it was released last year, this way: "Holley was clipped by a police car and falls on the ground face down. He clearly puts his arms out in the surrender pose then folds his hands over the back of his head before police move in. The first officer [Blomberg] stomps on Holley's head and he's repeatedly kicked. We counted four officers doing the kicking. Then one officer lands five kicks. It looks like the kicks are landing on Holley's head.

"Holley has been on the ground with cops on top of him for about 20 seconds, and then one officer lands five heavy punches. The officer who did the kicking in the beginning does it again — this time from behind. Then he stomps on the back of his leg. And then just before a handcuffed Holley is picked up to be taken to a patrol car, there's another kick."

"The images were clear and graphic — Houston police kicking, punching and stomping a teenage burglary suspect who had run, but was now clearly trying to surrender," Kofi Taharka told Workers World. "This is racist, it is criminal, and the charges against the cops should be felony attempted murder. The Black Justice Tuesday Coalition will continue petitioning and demonstrating and organizing our community until we have justice." □

In May 2011, the FBI and a Special Weapons and Tactics team from the Los Angeles County Sheriffs and the Alhambra Police Department smashed down the door to Montes' home and arrested him.

Incredibly, the FBI is framing Montes today based on an arrest that resulted in a misdemeanor from a 1969 demonstration. They are rewriting history and call-

CHICAGO

Cops' brutality has long tradition

By Caleb T. Maupin

The Chicago cops' brutal handling of this May's anti-NATO demonstrators was right in line with their history of bloody atrocities against workers and oppressed people.

In 1886, Chicago police coldbloodedly killed strikers demanding an eight-hour day.

In 1930, police gunfire killed Lee Mason, an African-American Communist who was running for Congress from a Chicago district. In 1937, Chicago police fired on striking workers at Republic Steel, killing 10.

In 1968, Chicago cops severely beat demonstrators and news reporters during protests against the Democratic National Convention.

Fred Hampton, a 21-year-old, Chicago-based Black Panther Party leader, was executed in December 1969 during a predawn police raid on his apartment. The initial barrage of police gunfire killed Panther leader Mark Clark and gravely wounded Hampton. Panther Deborah Johnson, also present in the apartment, recounted how the police then murderously pumped more bullets into Hampton to ensure that he wouldn't survive.

Starting in 1990, Chicago police officer Jon Burge spent two decades torturing

ing the original charge a felony.

What happened in 1969 is that the police entered the campus of East Los Angeles High School to suppress a student demonstration calling for more Chicano studies. They assaulted the demonstration, and later when Montes was driving home with his sister, he was stopped by the police and charged with assaulting a police officer. They claimed that he threw an empty soda can, which hit and injured a cop. The case was not completely settled until 10 years later — as a misdemeanor conviction.

If that conviction had been a felony, it could be used to frame Montes today. That is how the FBI is attempting to fabricate the current case against this popular figure in the progressive movement.

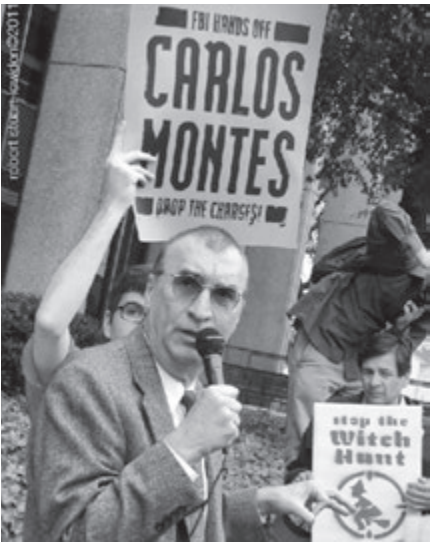
people on Chicago's South Side to extract confessions from them. He was finally brought down and jailed in 2010, after years of community organizing to expose his crimes.

So when thousands of people from across the U.S. gathered in Chicago to protest against NATO, Chicago police responded with their usual brutality. The National Lawyer's Guild estimates that cops arrested more than 117 people during the events. In a news release, the NLG characterized the police activities during the summit as "harassment and violence, serious injuries, high-level charges, and exceptionally high bonds."

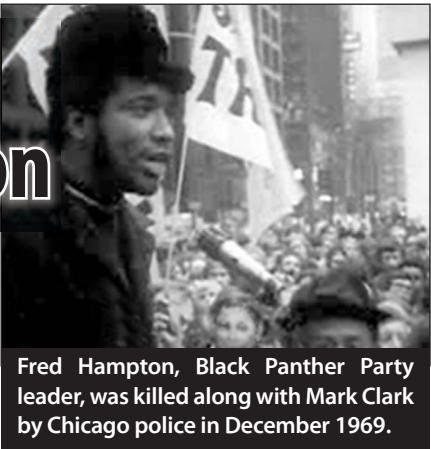
The NLG noted that illegal searches were carried out, and that at least two dozen protesters required medical attention.

Five protesters face terrorism related charges. Sarah Gelsomino, who is representing three of the five, said, "Charging these people who are here to peacefully protest against NATO for terrorism when in reality the police have been terrorizing activists in Chicago is absolutely outrageous." (Chicago Tribune, May 19)

Gelsomino has come under fire from Chicago police for heroically releasing photographs of two men believed to be police



Supporters near Los Angeles are being asked to join the daily rallies outside the court or help pack the courtroom beginning June 20. Others can help by signing the petition posted at stopfbila.net or by calling District Attorney Steve Cooley at 213-974-3512 to demand that the charges be dropped. □



Fred Hampton, Black Panther Party leader, was killed along with Mark Clark by Chicago police in December 1969.

informants within the Occupy movement.

A victory was won when Danny Johnson, who had been arrested on May 15 during an immigration rally, had all charges against him dropped. He had spent over a week in jail on a \$10,000 bond.

Many of those arrested still remain behind bars, some being held with bail set at more than a million dollars. Some are even being arbitrarily held in solitary confinement, according to reports.

The Eighth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, with its prohibitions on "excessive bail," "excessive fines" and "cruel and unusual punishment" was completely ignored in Chicago during the NATO summit. This anti-constitutional behavior points to key realities about capitalist society.

It shows that the ruling class is prepared to disregard law and human rights when faced with a real people's challenge, whatever its rhetoric is about "human rights concerns" in other countries. □

Activist imprisoned after speaking truth to power

By Desiree DeLoach
New York

Many can be found in courtrooms across the country nervous and withdrawn, reluctant to speak their minds. It's no wonder: they've been targeted and victimized their entire lives, many stopped and frisked since they were children.

But this is the year of the activist. This is the year when people are looking to their left and right and seeing others standing up. It's giving courage to many that before did not recognize their power.

Occupy Wall Street activist Christina Gonzalez embodied just such power and courage when she called Judge John H. Wilson a "racist white pig" after he ordered her arrest in a Brownsville, Brooklyn, courtroom.

Gonzalez was in court for a civil disobedience arrest on Nov. 1, 2011, after protesting New York City's Stop and Frisk policy. She had been escorted out of the courtroom earlier that day after asking the court clerk a question regarding her lawyer, who was unable to be present that

day. Unaware that she was not supposed to reenter, she came back into the courtroom when her case was called.

When Judge Wilson demanded an apology from Gonzalez, she refused, saying that in good conscience she could not apologize. Judge Wilson then held her in contempt of court and ordered her arrest. She served a 10-day sentence at Riker's Island.

A man recording the incident was also handcuffed, and court employees later deleted the content of the interaction. Gideon Oliver, president of the National Lawyer's Guild's New York City chapter, said, "Even if he violated the rule which prohibits filming in the courtroom, unless he consented, or officers had a warrant, it sounds like the court employees were overreaching." (Gothamist, May 15)

Gonzalez's comment was not unwarranted. In 2006, Judge Wilson penned an anti-immigration children's book entitled "Hot House Flowers," which depicts illegal immigrants as dandelions that use up water, soil and sunlight to the detriment of the native flowers in the hot house. The book claims the dandelions need to be

"weeded out." Critics of "Hot House Flowers" say it teaches xenophobia.

Matthew Swaye, a fellow defendant in the Stop Stop and Frisk cases, describes Judge Wilson as "the face of mass incarceration."

Gonzalez says she was inspired by Bobby Constantino, who was arrested after protesting a court verdict against Stop and Frisk protesters earlier this month. After Judge Robert Mandelbaum declared all 20 defendants guilty of disorderly conduct, Constantino put his hands behind his head and proclaimed that he did not agree with the decision. He remained in the courtroom until he was arrested. Constantino even spray painted the pillars of City Hall in Manhattan with hands and the words "NYPD Keep Your Hands Off Me." His full story can be found on his blog at <http://cityintrouble.blogspot.com>.

On May 17, Gonzalez was released from Riker's Island, where she says she spent the week with some amazing women. She is still in good spirits while enjoying time with family and loved ones. □

COLOMBIA

New group shows hope of bringing change

By Berta Joubert-Ceci

Colombians launched a new movement in April that may challenge the oligarchy’s rule there. La Marcha Patriótica [Patriotic March or PM] is an outgrowth of the diverse social movements in Colombia. Before proceeding to Workers World’s interview with a Patriotic March spokesperson, a brief description of recent developments will help readers understand this movement’s significance.

Colombia’s current political climate

Two years have passed since Colombia’s president, Juan Manuel Santos, took office. Santos, the ruling-class member who was educated in private schools in Colombia and universities in the U.S. and Britain, shows a sophistication that his predecessor lacked. Santos has given the impression that he somehow is fairer and more democratic than former president and paramilitary ally, Álvaro Uribe. Even the trade agreement, which Washington was pushing for for so long but failed to pass under Uribe, now has been approved. This, despite the recent report released by the State Department indicating that “the most serious problems of Colombia in the period were ‘impunity and a deficient judicial system, corruption and social discrimination.’” (noticiascaracol.com)

State repression and violence against the progressive forces and the armed insurgency continue unabated. Labor leaders continue to be assassinated by the paramilitary forces linked to the Colombian army. Transnational corporations continue stealing the Colombian peoples’ resources.

In spite of these continuing atrocities, there is a polarization within the established system, between Santos and Uribe, which was the focus of a recent editorial in the daily El Espectador. Uribe blames Santos for not following his policies of “Democratic Security” — meaning an overtly repressive state. In the article, entitled, “Against Itself” [En contra de sí mismo], the author, Nicolás Uribe Rueda, exposes the serious polarization and “the weakening and self-destruction of the

institutional mechanisms” that are supposed to “solve the most complex problems of our society.” (Elespectador.com)

Within that context, he mentions the Congress and the judicial system, stating that “Colombians distrust politicians and judges alike.” He portrays a completely dysfunctional state that works on behalf of different individuals’ interests.

Will the forces allied to Uribe make a move against the Santos government? Uribe has been traveling to the U.S. and various countries in Latin America promoting his views and his hatred of Venezuela’s president, Hugo Chávez. Is this an attempt to gather support? Only time will tell.

David Florez speaks about the Patriotic March

In the meantime, the left political forces are moving and gathering strength.

David Florez, who until recently was a leader of the growing student movement, is one of several spokespersons of the PM. Florez told WW/MO of PM’s origins: “It arises from a process of confluence of the Colombian social and popular movement of long ago. In the first place, it comes from the reconstruction of the peasant movement, of great mobilizations in the 1990s, of the reconstruction of the student movement, particularly from universities in the 2000s, and from the convening of joint mobilizations.”

Florez spoke of the first large national and popular mobilization in 2007 against Uribe’s government in many departments [states] of the country which led to the founding of a coordinating group formed mainly by peasants’ organizations. Later on, Indigenous, students’ and workers’ organizations joined. In 2009, after an International Meeting on Peace and Humanitarian Exchange, other organizations joined the effort.

The basis for joining was a shared understanding about peace, a political solution for the Colombian conflict and the need for a humanitarian exchange [of political prisoners and those retained by the insurgent forces].

By 2010, organizations that were strug-

gling against the neoliberal model also joined in and a major mobilization took place on July 20 as they confronted the government’s official celebration of the bicentennial of the country’s independence.

“It was an important date for us because it was a date that they used to say that Colombia was a prosperous country, with freedom, democracy and sovereignty, but for us it was an opportunity to say quite the opposite. A country where there is no sovereignty, where there is no real democracy, where there is no real sharing of the wealth, but on the contrary, there is a large concentration of wealth [in few hands].

“Then we organized ourselves to hold a commemoration critical of the [official] bicentennial and carry out what was called the Patriotic March and Open Cabildo for Independence. A cabildo is a space for political discussion and participation. At that time, we mobilized more than 60,000 people throughout the country and developed 10 thematic cabildos.

“Since then, we have been preparing this initiative,” Florez continued. “That is how the PM was born, for the reconstruction of the popular movement and out of the belief that a different way of carrying out politics is necessary.”

In 1985, the FARC-EP, along with other organizations, founded the Patriotic Union, a successful electoral party, as part of a proposal for peace and democratic politics under negotiations with then President Belisario Betancourt. However, thousands of its leaders and members were killed by paramilitaries and the Colombian state security forces. The extermination of this organization, with more than 4,000 people assassinated, was called Operation Red Dance.

Taking into account this genocide, WW/MO asked Florez to compare the PU with the PM. He said, “The PU was born out of a treaty between the state and the [armed] insurgency ... for the purpose of participation in the political scene and to develop the reforms that the country needed. The PM arises from popular and social movements and some political organizations.

“There are differences but also similarities. The PM as well as the PU mean the

possibility for many sectors that do not feel represented by the existing political parties ... to have a space where they discuss their problems, but also raise their proposals.”

Another Red Dance in the making?

The PM has gotten no assurances from the government regarding security. In fact, members of the Colombian army and other government forces have harassed and held members of the PM in different parts of the country. Mao Enrique Rodríguez, chief of bodyguards for Carlos Lozano, another spokesperson of the PM from the Colombian Communist Party, was shot to death on April 27. Hernán Henry Díaz, leader of the Patriotic Council of Putumayo, has disappeared in a region between two army roadblocks [retenes]. Paramilitary groups harass peasant communities in Antioquia.

In Colombia, dissent is a crime punishable with death, torture, disappearances or long prison terms. That has not changed and that is precisely what the Patriotic March organizes against.

One important distinction between the PU and the PM is that the PM is not an electoral party. It is an attempt to unite all the possible forces into an effective social movement that can do away with the anti-democratic and exclusionary system that pervades Colombia. It has a significant presence of Afro Colombians, Indigenous people, peasants, workers and students. Another spokesperson of the PM is ex-Sen. Piedad Córdoba, a courageous Afro Colombian woman who has been instrumental in the process of humanitarian exchange.

The PM has developed a document explaining their goals and methods which has been amply discussed around the country. Florez explained how they work hard to involve all the members in making decisions, not relying on representatives or leaders. As such, it is an example of participatory democracy.

More information can be read on their website, marchapatriotica.org. It is indeed a welcomed development in that suffering country, one that can serve as example to the world. □

The Pentagon targets Honduras

By Michael Kramer

A delegation of human rights activists from the U.S., organized by Rights Action and the Alliance for Global Justice, recently visited the site of the May 11 massacre of indigenous Mosquito people in Honduras.

Four people were killed and others severely wounded while traveling in canoes on the Patuca River. The river is the only way of getting around in an area that has no roads. The victims — who had nothing to do with drug trafficking — were shot by helicopter fire during a joint U.S.-Honduran drug interdiction operation that was planned using counterinsurgency tactics developed in Iraq and Afghanistan.

At a U.S. State Department press conference on May 17, the Obama administration admitted that members of the U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency’s Foreign-deployed Advisory Support Team (FAST) were aboard the helicopters, that the helicopters were owned by the State Department, and that they were flown by Guatemalan military officers and “contract pilots.”

The administration denied that the FAST unit fired any weapons. However,

no matter who did the firing, it is inconceivable that the FAST hit-squad did not have ultimate command and control of this operation.

On May 22-23, the human rights delegation visited the remote community of Ahuas in the Moskitia region of Honduras, located on the Caribbean coast. In a press release the delegation reported that it “witnessed an atmosphere of terror being generated amongst dire poverty, in an area where the indigenous people are now losing control of natural resources.” (May 27)

The press release adds, “Following the massacre, at least one helicopter landed and at least 10 tall, light-skinned English speakers with limited Spanish proficiency, wearing military-type uniforms, exited the helicopters. ... They aimed guns at, threatened to kill, and handcuffed residents of the town who had come to assist the wounded.”

Pentagon’s expanding role in Honduras

This atrocity highlights the expanding role of the Pentagon in Honduras. FAST teams, headquartered at the Marine Corps Base in Quantico, Va., and Kabul, Afghanistan, are a paramilitary arm of the Penta-

gon. They are able to move in and out of countries like Honduras with a low profile.

FAST members are mostly U.S. military veterans with Special Operations experience. The fact that FAST appears on an organizational chart of the U.S. Department of Justice means nothing — it is a semi-clandestine arm of the Pentagon.

The main U.S. military base in Honduras is at the Soto Cano Air Base, 60 miles from capital city Tegucigalpa. The U.S. Army’s 1st Battalion, 228th Aviation Regiment, which flies Blackhawk and Chinook helicopters, is stationed there. Meanwhile, the U.S. Air Force’s 612th Air Base Squadron maintains a C-5A Galaxy-capable, all-weather, day/night runway for potential large-scale deployments of ground troops. A number of smaller bases have recently been built in La Venta, Guanaja, Barra de Caratasca and Puerto Castilla for use by DEA/FAST.

As the liberation movement in Honduras gathers strength, experience, internal support and international solidarity, the U.S.-backed oligarchy and its figurehead, Honduran President Porfirio Lobo, are in a panic. Lobo’s reaction to the killings on the Patuca River was to

call for more DEA/FAST support!

The drug war is a phony war with a lot of innocent people caught in the middle. The banks — which every year launder billions of dollars in drug profits — are almost never targeted. In Honduras the Pentagon’s real target is the liberation movement, whose leading force is the National Front for Popular Resistance, which calls for a new Honduras based on justice for all working and oppressed peoples and freedom from imperialist control.

U.S. troops and DEA/FAST out of Honduras!

Kramer, a member of Veterans for Peace, has traveled to Honduras on solidarity delegations organized by the International Action Center.



The Lavender & Red series of articles by Leslie Feinberg, author of *Stone Butch Blues*, is now available online. workers.org/lavender-red

VENEZUELA

New labor law empowers workers

By Cheryl LaBash

Imagine a labor law written by workers.

In Venezuela, on May 1 — International Workers’ Day — Venezuelan President Hugo Chávez signed just such a law, the result of a massive consultation with Venezuelan workers, inscribing “social justice” beside his signature.

The law replaces some of the provisions that were stripped from a 1936 labor law in 1997, but goes further to severely curtail a basic underpinning of capitalism — its power and authority to hire and dismiss workers to exploit their labor. The provisions of the Organic Law on Work and Workers are a stunning contrast to the capitalist shock-and-awe forced on workers in the U.S.

Last January, Oswaldo Vera, president of the National Assembly’s Commission of Integral Social Development in Venezuela, said the law would “address two main issues: the role of workers in building a new society and the historical confrontation of labor and capital.” He predicted the new law would “pave the way for new changes in the means of production so that labor [can] stop being merchandise and become the main source of development.” (tinyurl.com/7ndwe3q)

As outlined in a summary provided by the Embassy of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, some important provisions from this process are:

Expanded workplace anti-discrimination laws added nationality, sexuality, membership in a labor union, prior criminal record, or any type of disability. “The law states that all persons have the right to work and the duty to do so in accordance with their capacities, including those with [disabilities].” The right of people with disabilities to dignified work and the full development of their potential is outlined in a dedicated chapter calling for employers to set aside 5 percent of jobs for them.

Job security and stability is increased. To legally fire or lay off workers, the boss must go to court to prove there is a legal basis for the termination. An unjustly fired worker has 10 days to appeal to the court, which can order reinstatement with back pay. Bosses failing to respond to the court can be jailed. In addition, severance pay is owed to workers who leave a job for any reason, with a minimum of two months’ salary for each year worked and a possible additional maximum of 30 days pay, at the rate of two days pay for every year worked after the first year. Workers unjustly fired who elect not to return to their former job are entitled to double severance.

Outsourcing is banned. No longer can employers avoid labor laws by hiring through outside firms.

Shorter work week, reduced from 44 hours to 40 hours, with two full consecutive days of rest. The law maintains a 15-day minimum annual vacation plus an additional day for each year worked, to a maximum of 30 days. Vacation and year-end bonuses are doubled.

Maternity leave expanded to 26 weeks full pay, including for adoption and two-week paternity leave. Childcare facilities, already required in workplaces with more than 20 workers, must include special areas for the two 30-minute breaks for nursing women. For employees at workplaces that lack proper facilities, nursing women are now entitled to two hour-and-a-half breaks. Discrimination against women who are pregnant is barred; no pay reduction for pregnant or nursing women. Women and men with children under two years of age are protected from losing their jobs.

Pension rights expanded to include all workers, with retirement generally at age 55 for women and age 60 for men. This includes workers in the formal and informal sectors, women who remain at home to care for their families, and independent workers or freelancers.

These improvements result from the input of women’s organizations. An International Women’s Day march delivered demands to the president last March 8. Nicholas Maduro, who is head of the Presidential Commission for the Organic Labor Law, said, “This law proposes conditions to overcome definitively capitalist exploitation and to create free, egalitarian labor conditions for the homeland and social development.” Maduro recalled that the law is the product of years of labor struggles and was discussed in popular assemblies held throughout the country since 2008, bringing more than 19,000 proposals to the commission. (tinyurl.com/d9n5mug) □

U.S. continues campaign against socialist Cuba

By Gene Clancy

Cuban President Raul Castro’s daughter heard nothing but applause on May 23 as she made her first public appearance in San Francisco.

Mariela Castro, the niece of retired President Fidel Castro, received a pair of standing ovations as she took part in a panel at San Francisco General Hospital on health care for transgender patients. The panel was part of a larger conference of the Latin America Studies Association.

Although her hour-long talk focused on medical issues, she nevertheless strongly condemned the U.S. embargo on Cuba and called its supporters in this country “a tiny mafia” who have “no scruples.”

Speaking through a translator, Castro said she had successfully worked within the Communist Party in Cuba to repudiate “all forms of discrimination in our society,” particularly bias against gays and transgender people.

As a member of the Communist Party and as the director for the National Center for Sexual Education (Cenesex), Mariela Castro is one of the most prominent and outspoken gay rights activists on the island. Her work has been pivotal in the many reforms that have been enacted in favor of recognition and acceptance of LGBT human rights, and it has also resulted in pioneering legislation, including allowance for transgender individuals to receive gender reassignment surgery without charge (as a health care provision), and to change their legal gender.

“If we don’t change our patriarchal and homophobic culture that brings stigma,” Castro said, “we cannot advance to a new society. That is what we want — the power of emancipation through socialism.” (SFGate, May 24)

Right wingers all over the U.S. attacked Ms. Castro and condemned the Obama ad-

ministration for granting her a visa. These critics failed to mention that that very same State Department had denied visas to 11 other scholars hoping to join the same conference. Some of those turned down were prominent Cubans who have been allowed U.S. visas in the past, including Rafael Hernández, the editor of the Cuban intellectual journal Temas, who has taught at both Harvard and Columbia universities.

The pretexts for the denials were that those denied were security risks and that their presence would be “detrimental to the interests of the United States,” (Washington Post, May 18) which seemed contradictory and baffling to some observers.

“It’s just bizarre,” said Joy Olson, executive director of the Washington Office on Latin America, an independent think tank. “I have trouble believing that all of these people who have been up here working at the most prestigious universities in the United States have gone from one day to the next to being a security threat.” (CTPost.com, May 18)

Yet, one of those who was, in fact, granted a visa was Eusebio Leal, a historian who has spearheaded the renovation of Old Havana and sits on the Communist Party Central Committee. He spoke at the Brookings Institute in Washington, D.C.

Rafael Hernández attributed the seeming contradictions to politics: “They have denied visas to several of us who frequently travel to the United States,” Hernandez said. “That is the cost, I suppose, that they are paying to bring in the rest. They have to throw a piece of meat to [Cuban American right-wing politicians] ... because they gave a visa to Mariela and Eusebio.” (ctpost.com, May 18)

A policy of terrorism against socialism

The above should be seen in the context of the long-term, unremitting hostility of the U.S. towards Cuba and its socialist system ever since 1959. Whether Washington uses war and terrorism, trade, or cultural exchanges, the U.S. goal remains ending socialism in Cuba. Even some who oppose the U.S. blockade of Cuba say they want to “open up” Cuba to better overturn the socialist government.

President Barack Obama has empha-

sized his “people to people” and cultural exchanges, saying it is a cornerstone of his Cuba policy. While it is true that such cultural exchanges have increased during Obama’s administration, the illegal U.S. blockade of Cuba has remained firmly in place, and four of the Cuban Five remain in jail, finishing their 14th year of tortuously long sentences including double-life for Gerardo Hernandez. Although the fifth man, Rene Gonzalez, was released from prison on Oct. 7, he is forced to remain against his will in the U.S. — in Miami where his life is endangered — for three years supervised release.

Shortly after President Obama took office, Cuban Foreign Minister Bruno Rodríguez Parrilla observed that “the economic, commercial and financial blockade has been interposed between us and remains intact. There has been no change in the policy of the United States on Cuba.” (Cuban Foreign Ministry website, 2009)

Meanwhile, terrorist activities continue against Cuba.

At 3 a.m. on April 27, a Coral Gables travel agency exploded into flames. Police dogs detected accelerant inside the burnt-out building, and the agency’s owner said she suspected it was firebombed in retaliation for booking flights to Cuba.

“It’s not that it’s burned. It’s pulverized,” Airline Broker owner Vivian Mannerud told Channel 10. “All I know is that I have never seen a fire pulverize things. I’ve seen it in pictures of the atomic bomb in Hiroshima.” (Miami New Times, April 27)

A billboard in Little Havana advertising a video that defends the Cuban Five was taken down just hours after it went up, amid anonymous phone calls threatening to attack a restaurant beneath the sign.

Radio Miami commentator Max Lesnick, who regularly demands the release of the five anti-terrorist Cubans, said the Alianza Martiana paid for the advertisement. Lesnick is also one of the leaders of the Alianza.

The ad went up on a billboard on the roof of a restaurant on the corner of 1st Street and 17th Avenue SW around noon Wednesday and was already down by about 7 p.m., Lesnick said.

Restaurant owner Liliana Vásquez said

she received several anonymous phone threats, including one saying, “We’re going to destroy your place.” (Miami Herald, May 27)

There are some who maintain that terrorist acts against Cuba are solely the work of right-wing Cuban exiles. But the U.S. has had an active policy of terrorism and murder against the Cuban people going back five decades.

Stephen Kimber, an award-winning Canadian professor of journalism, says that the Cuban Five were arrested only after they discovered a boat-bomb anchored in Miami, part of a plot against Cuba, and after the FBI found out that the Cubans had this information. (Sting of the Wasp, April 23) It is just as unbelievable that the U.S. knew nothing of the many terrorist acts against Cuba over the years, as it is that prominent Cuban scholars are a security risk.

Cuban Foreign Minister Rodríguez Parrilla said before the United Nations :

“In Cuba, children ask how it is possible that in this country [i.e., the U.S.], terrorists walk the streets and anti-terrorists are jailed. The five Cuban anti-terrorist fighters have suffered cruel, inhumane and degrading conditions for simply trying to prevent terrorist acts. They must be freed, including the one who is currently on supervised release and is being prevented from rejoining his family. It would be an act of justice and if that is not to be, at least, a humanitarian act.

“Only in a country like the United States, could the chairwoman of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs ... lead a tribute to international terrorist Luis Posada Carriles, responsible for the in-flight downing of a civilian aircraft and, only here, could a group of children, from a theater company visiting the United States, be called terrorists and spies.

“The political battle which took place here today validates what our Comandante en Jefe Fidel Castro Ruz wrote ... in an article entitled, ‘NATO’s Genocidal Role’: ‘The necessity of ending not only the blockade, but the system which engenders injustice on our planet, squanders its natural resources and is placing human survival at risk.’” (Cuba MinRex, Oct. 25) □

Rainbow Solidarity In Defense of CUBA

This groundbreaking book documents revolutionary Cuba’s inspiring trajectory of progress towards liberation of sexualities, genders and sexes. Book available at Amazon.com

Tinley Park Five: Fight fascism

On May 19, one day before the 15,000-person protest against the North Atlantic Treaty Organization Summit in downtown Chicago, another kind of protest took place in a suburban community of Chicago known as Tinley Park. Eighteen anti-racists, with weapons in hand, confronted members of the Illinois European Heritage Association. Ten people were reportedly injured, mainly with head wounds.

The IEHA, which is associated with Stormfront, the so-called “Nationalist Socialist Movement” and the Knights Party, was holding an “economic summit” at the Ashford House restaurant. It was the fifth such summit organized by white supremacists in the Midwest since 2010.

The group is part of the “Pioneer Little Europe” (PLE) movement, which seeks to establish mutually supportive white supremacist enclaves throughout the United States,” according to the Anti-Defamation League’s website. The ADL is pro-Israel and against the Palestinian right to return. Stormfront has a forum with “over 6 million posts, 490,000 discussion threads, and 170,000 members.” Beside English, its discussion threads include “Croatian, Spanish, Italian, Portuguese, German, French, Russian, and other languages.” (www.adl.org)

It is noteworthy that while the Department of Homeland Security, the Chicago police and other federal, state and local agencies were working overtime to wiretap, arrest and spy on anti-NATO activists, they allowed neofascists who openly promote the extermination of people of color and Jewish people to meet publicly in a restaurant. To think that these agencies were unaware of this meeting is to be naive.

The anti-racists, all of them white, are members of the Hoosiers Anti-Racist Movement based in Indiana. Its roots are in Anti-Racist Action, which was founded during the mid-1980s to confront racist and fascist organizations. ARA’s main ideology is anarchism. Chapters exist in various cities.

Just recently, HARM held a fundraising event for CeCe McDonald — the African-American trans woman who was a victim of a racist, anti-trans attack by white bigots in July 2011. She was subsequently charged with second-degree murder. McDonald, who was exercising her right to self-defense, is facing more than three years in prison after agreeing to the prosecution’s offer to plead guilty to a reduced second-degree manslaughter charge.

Five members of HARM were captured immediately by the police on May 19. The other 13 escaped and are still being sought by the cops. Calling themselves the Tinley Park 5, three of them are brothers, Jason W. Sutherland, Cody L. Sutherland and Dylan J. Sutherland. The other two are Alex R. Stuck and John S. Tucker. Four out of the Five are in their 20s.

The Five are scheduled to be arraigned on June 12. The bond is \$175,000 each for four of the Five and \$250,000 for the fifth. Each bond is more than the one set for George Zimmerman, who fatally shot Trayvon Martin, an unarmed 17-year-old African-American youth on Feb. 26 in Sanford, Fla. Zimmerman remains free.

According to the HARM Website, the Five have declined to make any public statements due to death threats their families are receiving from racists.

The right to preemptive strike

The May 19 incident should be viewed within the broad context of the global economic crisis that fuels the racist profiling of oppressed peoples, especially if they are Black and Brown. One only need utter the names of Trayvon Martin, Sean Bell, Oscar Grant, Ramarley Graham, Anastasio Hernández Rojas, Rekia Boyd, Darrin Hanna, Bo Morrison, Alan Blueford, Aiyana Stanley Jones and many others who have been killed by police or vigilante terror. Earlier this year, neo-Nazis randomly killed four Black men in Tulsa, Okla.

There are mass incarcerations, no jobs, attacks on education and virtually no bright future for young people under capitalism, no matter their nationality. The economic crisis is felt acutely throughout the U.S., but it has hit the Midwest especially hard.

In light of this unprecedented crisis, the Tinley Park 5, as well as many whites involved in the Occupy Wall Street movement, are consciously choosing to side with the oppressed youth and workers and not succumb to racist demagoguery by neofascists. No matter one’s view of the Five’s choice of tactics, the main question is: Don’t the workers and oppressed have the right to independently strike back, by any means necessary, when their rights are being threatened or denied by forces of political reaction?

Workers World says yes. During the 19th century, the great militants John Brown and Nat Turner did not wait for approval from the abolitionist movement — whose leadership was dedicated to pacifism — to use organized violence to strike a blow against the barbaric, genocidal system of slavery.

There is no equal sign between the violence of the oppressed and those who stand with the workers and oppressed against the violence of the oppressor. The same principle should apply to any righteous struggle of an oppressed people against imperialist war and occupation, no matter what ideology may dominate that struggle. This is what communists refer to as self-determination of oppressed people.

The IEHA is not isolated from the repressive capitalist state; it is an appendage to it. It is an extra-legal terrorist force that does not have any legal standing, including any First Amendment rights. What the Tinley Park 5 did on May 19 was to carry out a preemptive strike to help expose the real danger that extremist groups pose to the movement and the masses here and worldwide. The Five heroically showed that these groups have to be crushed sooner than later.

Free the Tinley Park 5!
For more information on the case, including legal defense information, go to [@TinleyPark5](https://twitter.com/TinleyPark5) and @IndianaAntifa.

MARXISM, REPARATIONS & the Black Freedom Struggle

An anthology of writings from Workers World newspaper. Edited by Monica Moorehead. Includes: **Racism, National Oppression & Self-Determination** Larry Holmes **Black Labor from Chattel Slavery to Wage Slavery** Sam Marcy **Black Youth: Repression & Resistance** LeiLani Dowell **The Struggle for Socialism Is Key** Monica Moorehead **Black & Brown Unity: A Pillar of Struggle for Human Rights & Global Justice!** Saladin Muhammad **Alabama’s Black Belt: Legacy of Slavery, Sharecropping & Segregation** Consuela Lee **Harriet Tubman, Woman Warrior** Mumia Abu-Jamal **Are Conditions Ripe Again Today? 40th Anniversary of the 1965 Watts Rebellion** John Parker **Racism & Poverty in the Delta** Larry Hales **Haiti Needs Reparations, Not Sanctions** Pat Chin

Available at Amazon.com and bookstores around the country. workers.org/reparations

‘Two, three, many Greeces’ raised in Frankfurt

The G8 met in Camp David, Md., May 18-19. NATO met in Chicago May 20-21. Both drew protests. In Frankfurt, Germany, the same May weekend, European workers and unemployed shut down the European Central Bank and other financial institutions.

Just as in Chicago, the police in the European financial capital set up a massive presence, forbade many actions on May 17 and 18, and worked with the corporate media to falsely charge demonstrators with planning violence. Nevertheless, the May 19 march was 30,000 strong, say demonstrators, though it was surrounded by thousands of police.

A major issue of the protest was the massive assault by the “Troika” — the European Central Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the European Union — on the Greek working class and on Greece’s sovereignty. Speakers emphasized the need for solidarity with the Greek working class.

Sonia Mitralia, a member of the Greek Committee Against the Debt and the Women’s Initiative Against the Debt and Austerity, was one of those speakers. The following is excerpted from her speech.

Comrades, I come from Greece, a country destroyed and desperate, a country in ruins but still standing tall. From this Greece that resists and has shouted a huge, magnificent “No” to its torturers: the Troika and the [International Monetary Fund], the Brussels [European] Commission and their [German Chancellor Angela] Merkel and [German Finance Minister Wolfgang] Schäuble, their [European Commission President José Manuel] Barroso, [former French President Nicolas] Sarkozy and the bankers. In short, to those who govern us and impose inhuman, barbaric policies on us.

These policies are already causing child malnutrition and even hunger in major Greek cities. And where is all this happening? ... Here in the heart of rich Europe. And when? Now, at the moment in history when humanity produces more wealth than it ever had before! ...

Comrades, the results of the May 6 election leave no room for doubt: A huge majority of Greeks have rejected the politics of austerity. This is a true political earthquake! The country that was chosen to be the laboratory for an austerity pro-

gram is now in open revolt against those who starve and humiliate it, against those who close its hospitals and schools, and against those who destroy this beautiful country to sell it for nothing, against its Greek and foreign torturers alike.

But take care: The Greeks in revolt should not be left alone at the moment they are transforming their anger into a conscious and liberating movement, now that the prospect of a Greek left government begins to rise on the horizon, to become possible and realistic. If Merkel and Sarkozy, the IMF and the European Commission in Brussels have made Greece a laboratory of their barbaric policies and made guinea pigs of the Greeks, it is up to us, people of Europe, to make Greece the front line of our common battles against those who destroy our lives and the environment. Because Greek resistance is our resistance, its struggles are our struggles. ...

Comrades, I come from a country that turns its gaze toward you today, awaiting concrete acts of solidarity. Now and not tomorrow. For it is now more than ever that the Greeks in revolt are directly threatened with extinction by those who fear that their example will be copied and spread like an oil slick across Europe.

And I assure you, these Greeks in revolt are convinced that the best way to show solidarity with them is to imitate them. Imitate their example at home, in your country, while developing and coordinating resistance against the inhuman policies of austerity and destruction. Besides, this is exactly what our enemies fear most: **Contagion!** The contagion of struggles throughout Europe.

So, yes, let us do it, let’s make **two, three, many Greeces!** Let’s get networked, coordinate our struggles, organize step-by-step a united and radical, massive and democratic movement, above all in our old continent, across Europe, from Romania to Ireland and from Italy to Iceland. A long-term movement with great liberating goals, which combines the broadest unity with a liberating radicalism. Now is the time. Because ... united we stand, divided we fall! Or in French struggle language: *Tous ensemble, tous ensemble, oué oué oué* [All together, all together, yeah yeah yeah]. ...

Thank you, comrades.
Speech translated from the French by John Catalinotto.

June 6 Wisconsin:

‘Keep it in the streets’

Continued from page 5

continue to allow themselves to be bound to the capitalist Democratic Party, which is controlled by the ruling class, the 1%, or will they sever the ties and chart their own independent course — like they did when

they occupied the state Capitol? The racist, anti-woman, anti-LGBTQ, anti-worker austerity laws will truly and effectively only be overturned by mass mobilization.

“The working class and the oppressed must take their destiny into their own hands and not hand their power over to the Democratic Party or other organizations controlled by Wall Street. The task of the liberation of the working class and oppressed can only be carried out by the working class and oppressed peoples themselves.”

For more information on June 6, visit tinyurl.com/7hrshf7. For news, information and updates on people’s struggles in Wisconsin, visit www.wibailoutpeople.org.

China's report on U.S. human rights

A boost to the protest movements

By Deirdre Griswold

The Chinese government has responded to accusations by the U.S. government and media criticizing that rapidly developing country for purported violations of human rights. On May 25, it issued a very detailed report called “The Human Rights Record of the United States in 2011.”

The Chinese report relies heavily on U.S. government and media sources for the extensive information it presents. It includes within the category of human rights such violations as the great income disparity in the U.S., the massive incarceration rate, racial discrimination, the high rates of unemployment and homelessness, the lack of health care for tens of millions, the heavy repression of the Occupy movement, the abuse of immigrants, the growth of the national security state, and U.S. military interventions in other nations.

The full text of the Chinese report is available online in English — and other languages — at news.xinhuanet.com.

China's public criticism of the U.S. government for its hypocrisy on human rights should be embraced by the progressive movement here. Even if this was forced on China's leaders by Washington's increasingly aggressive stance — in which each insult to China's sovereignty is accompanied by a chorus of self-righteous lecturing on human rights — the fact that China has responded by speaking truth to power is a welcome development.

China's State Council Information Office released its report immediately after the U.S. State Department issued its annual Country Reports on Human Rights on May 24. Washington's government of the 1% presumes to pass judgment on every other country in the world — as though it were just an impartial and independent arbiter of human rights.

But, as China rightfully points out, while the U.S. assumes the right to criticize nearly 200 countries and regions, it said not a word about “its own woeful human rights situation and kept silent about it.” The Chinese have released their own report “to reveal the true human rights situation of the United States to people across the world and urge the United States to face up to its own doings.”

Repression of Occupy Wall Street

The section of the document called “On Civil and Political Rights” cites many U.S. and British media sources on the treatment meted out to the Occupy Wall Street movement: “Claiming to defend 99 percent of the U.S. population against the wealthiest, the Occupy Wall Street protest movement tested the U.S. political, economic and social systems. ... [T]he single fact that thousands of protesters were treated in a rude and violent way, with many of them being arrested — the act of willfully trampling on people's freedom of assembly, demonstration and speech — could provide a glimpse to the truth of the so-called U.S. freedom and democracy.”

“On Oct. 9, 92 people were arrested in New York (New York Times, Oct. 15). The Occupy Wall Street movement was forced out of its encampment at Zuccotti Park and more than 200 people were arrested on Nov. 15 (The Guardian, Nov. 25). Chicago police arrested around 300 members of the Occupy Chicago protest in two weeks (Herald Sun, Oct. 24). At least 85 people were arrested when police used teargas and baton rounds to break up an Occupy Wall Street camp in Oakland,

California on Oct. 25. An Iraq war veteran had a fractured skull and brain swelling after being allegedly hit in the head by a police projectile (The Guardian, Oct. 26). A couple of hundred people were arrested when demonstrations were staged in different U.S. cities to mark the Occupy Wall Street movement's two-month anniversary on Nov. 17 (USA Today, Nov. 18). Among them, at least 276 were arrested in New York only. Some protesters were bloodied as they were hauled away. Many protesters accused the police of treating them in a brutal way (Wall Street Journal, Nov. 18).”

The Chinese statement then referred to the thousands of OWS demonstrators arrested in the last months of 2011, from the Brooklyn Bridge to Chicago and Oakland, Calif.

The report describes how police prevented reporters from getting close to the protesters as the Zuccotti Park encampment was being torn down. Reporters were pepper sprayed and some 200 arrested. The result was a news whiteout: “[W]hen the Occupy Wall Street movement evolved to be a global action, CNN and Fox News gave no live reports on it, in a sharp contrast to the square protest in Cairo, for which both CNN and Fox News broadcast live 24 hours.”

'Homeland Security' & the Internet

The document then takes up the question of government control of the Internet: “The U.S. Patriot Act and Homeland Security Act both have clauses about monitoring the Internet, giving the government or law enforcement organizations power to monitor and block any Internet content ‘harmful to national security.’ Protecting Cyberspace as a National Asset Act of 2010 stipulates that the federal government has ‘absolute power’ to shut down the Internet under a declared national emergency.

“According to a report by British newspaper the Guardian dated March 17, 2011, the U.S. military is developing software that will let it secretly manipulate social media sites by using fake online personas, and will allow the U.S. military to create a false consensus in online conversations, crowd out unwelcome opinions and smother commentaries or reports that do not correspond with its own objectives. The project aims to control and restrict free speech on the Internet.”

Rounding out its section on government repression, the document takes up the incarceration of millions in the U.S.: “The U.S. remains the country with the largest ‘prison population’ and the highest per capita level of imprisonment in the world, and the detention centers’ conditions are terrible. According to the U.S. Department of Justice, the number of prisoners amounted to 2.3 million in 2009 and one in every 132 American citizens is behind bars.”

The report addresses the issues of sexual victimization in prisons, youth suicides, the elimination of weekend lunches as a cost-cutting measure, the large number of life sentences and prisoners in isolation units — and then gives recognition to two hunger strikes by California prisoners last year that were prompted by these unbearable conditions

'Capitalization' of politics

The document explains how the “capitalization” of politics creates a system that serves the “master of money.” It backs up

this assertion with quotes from Time, the New York Times and the Washington Post on how powerful members of Congress get huge campaign contributions from industries regulated by the committees they sit on. It also recalls the U.S. Supreme Court's Citizens United ruling that allows corporations to “use their considerable financial muscle to promote candidates and policies favorable to their business operations and to resist policies and shut out candidates deemed inimical to their business interests.”

Perhaps this section of the report can also be read as a warning about the inroads made in Chinese society by so-called entrepreneurs, many with close ties to U.S. corporations, who have unlimited funds to corrupt officials and influence economic decisions.

Unemployment & polarization of wealth

When the economic crisis that began in the U.S. in 2008 hit China, the central government, led by the Communist Party, responded with a \$700 billion stimulus program. Unlike the stimulus program of the Obama administration, however, the money did not go to bail out banks or provide businesses with tax “incentives” to expand production — which didn't work so far as jobs were concerned.

In China, the stimulus money was invested in the country's infrastructure. Some 30 million jobs were created in railway expansion, an improved electrical grid, roads, green technology and other projects — about equal to the number of workers who lost jobs in export-oriented assembly plants.

Thus it should be no surprise that this document sees unemployment in the U.S. as a failing of the government, not as an inevitable fact of economic life.

It says that “At no time in the last 60 years had the country's long-term unemployment been so high for so long as it was in 2011. ... The New York Times reported on Dec. 12, 2011, that at last count, 13.3 million people were officially unemployed and that 5.7 million of them had been out of work for more than six months (The New York Times, Dec. 12, 2011). The unemployment rate was 8.9 percent for 2011 (www.bls.gov), and the unemployment rate for American youth between 25 and 34 stood at 26 percent in October of that year (The World Journal, Nov. 18, 2011), with more underemployed.”

The report takes up the claim that the United States has a large and growing “middle class”: “However, this is not the truth. According to the report issued by the U.S. Congressional Budget Office (CBO) on Oct. 25, 2011, the richest one percent of American families have the fastest growth of family revenue from 1979 to 2007 with an increase of 275 percent for after-tax income, while the after-tax income of the poorest 20 percent grew by only 18 percent.”

As for accumulated wealth, or assets, the gap is much, much wider: “The wealthiest 400 Americans have 1.5 trillion U.S. dollars' worth of assets (The China Press, October 13, 2011), or the same combined wealth as the poorest half of Americans — over 150 million people (www.currydemocrats.org).”

Poverty, homelessness & cuts in education

Next, the document lays out the social effects of this wealth gap: “Contrary to the wealthiest 10 percent, the number

of Americans living in poverty as well as poverty rate continued to hit record high, which is a great irony in the affluent America. A report published by the Census Bureau on Sept. 13, 2011, showed that 46.2 million people lived below the official poverty line in 2010, 2.6 million more than in 2009, hitting the highest record since 1959. The report also said that the percentage of Americans who lived below the poverty line in 2010 was 15.1 percent, the highest level since 1993.”

The study cites statistics on children living in poverty (22 percent) and people dependent on food stamps (46 million), as well as the sharp increase in homelessness and the number of people who lack health insurance (49.9 million). It points out that women and children are the most affected.

The report includes figures on the relentless cuts in education budgets. It mentions a demonstration of students in Berkeley protesting tuition increases and notes, “Reuters reported that two-thirds of undergraduate students would graduate with student loans about 25,000 U.S. dollars on average owing to the expensive college tuition (Reuters, Feb. 1, 2011).”

Racism & oppression

In a section called “On Racial Discrimination,” the Chinese report cites such authorities as the Urban League and the American Civil Liberties Union, as well as major newspapers, to show that conditions of employment, police harassment and poverty for those it calls “ethnic minorities” have actually worsened in recent years. It says that “According to the annual report released by the National Urban League of the U.S., African-Americans' 2011 Equality Index is currently 71.5 percent, compared to 2010's 72.1 percent — among which the economic equality index declined from 57.9 percent to 56.9 percent, and the health index, from 76.6 percent to 75 percent, and the index in the area of social justice, from 57.9 percent to 56.9 percent.”

The study then shows that the unemployment and poverty rates among African Americans, Latinos/as and Native people are nearly double those of whites because “Ethnic minorities in the United States have long been suffering systemic, widespread and institutional discrimination.” It gives figures on police stop-and-frisk rates being highest in these oppressed communities, and also describes the chilling effect of government surveillance and harassment on Muslim communities based on so-called anti-terrorism laws.

The document also reports on the “ferocious mistreatment” of what it calls “illegal immigrants,” citing laws in Arizona and Alabama that lead to mass detention of immigrants in camps where they are “denied enough food, water, medical care and sleep, even beaten up and confined in extreme coldness or heat, suffering both psychological abuse and threats of death (The World Journal, Sept. 24, 2011).”

Much of the information in this comprehensive report is well known to progressive activists in the United States. But not since the Chinese leadership opened up the country to foreign capital investment has the government produced such an indictment of the U.S. system. It is bound to reverberate around the world as the capitalist economic crisis sharpens the class struggle, both inside and outside the U.S. □



Bloqueo policial no logra detener protestas masivas contra los asesinos de la OTAN

Por Abayomi Azikiwe
Redactor de la Agencia Noticiera Panafricana
Chicago

Esta ciudad fue escenario de una histórica efusión de activismo e indignación el 20 de mayo, cuando al menos 15.000 personas se reunieron y marcharon en oposición a las políticas de guerra imperialista de la Organización del Tratado del Atlántico Norte. La manifestación tuvo lugar desafiando la intimidación del estado y de la clase dirigente que fue diseñada por la administración de la ciudad y los medios corporativos bajo el patrocinio de la Casa Blanca y el Pentágono.

Durante semanas los medios locales y nacionales que favorecen los intereses empresariales y militares, habían sido inundados con informes de posible violencia callejera y detenciones en masa. Fue un intento por desalentar que la gente viniera a Chicago para una serie de actividades que comenzó el fin de semana del 12 y 13 de mayo con la Cumbre del Pueblo.

Pero fracasó. La semana fue testigo de numerosas manifestaciones en apoyo a los derechos de inmigrantes y trabajadores/as y en defensa de la capacidad supuestamente protegida constitucionalmente, de hablar libremente y congregarse.

En el transcurso de la semana, la casa de un activista local en el barrio de Bridgeport fue allanada por la policía. Tres jóvenes fueron golpeados, detenidos y acusados falsamente de atroces cargos de “terrorismo”. Los activistas esencialmente estuvieron desaparecidos hasta que los abogados los pudieran ubicar en un calabozo, esposados como si fueran criminales peligrosos.

Por supuesto, los medios corporativos jugaron su parte al repetir constantemente sin ningún cuestionamiento, las falsas acusaciones de operar una fábrica de bombas de gasolina y planear ataques contra la sede de campaña del presidente Barack Obama, estaciones de policía locales, y otros objetivos.

Chicago parecía un campamento armado el 19 de mayo, justo un día antes de la gran manifestación y marcha. En casi cada esquina en el Loop, pandillas de la policía local de Chicago, funcionarios del Servicio de Protección Federal, policías del Condado de Cook y agentes del FBI parecían como si estuvieran dispuestos a luchar contra cualquier persona que pareciera desafiar su autoridad. En una manifestación pacífica contra la represión ese día, la policía embistió con sus bicicletas y un vehículo a una multitud de unos cientos de activistas en el centro de Chicago.

Manifestación y marcha, una victoria significativa

El 20 de mayo, en una temperatura de 90 F grados (32 C), la gente comenzó a reunirse temprano a las 10 de la mañana en el Parque Grant para la manifestación programada para el mediodía. Numerosas organizaciones pusieron mesas de literatura y las personas circulaban libremente, hablando de política y participando en presentaciones culturales espontáneas.

La manifestación incluyó más de 40 oradores/as que representaban diferentes afiliaciones políticas y organizativas: de derechos de inmigrantes, sindicatos, derechos civiles, liberación de afro-americanos/as, Palestina, grupos contra la guerra, solidaridad internacional, de las luchas por la vivienda, la mujer, el medio ambiente, de los/as filipinos/as y otras. Los/as oradores/as incluían a Larry Holmes del Partido Workers World/Mundo Obrero y la Red de Occupy4Jobs; Joe Iosbaker de la Comisión para Detener la Represión del FBI; Standish Willis de la Conferencia Nacional de Abogados/as Negros/as; Kathy Kelly de Voces por la No-Violencia Creativa; Carlos Montes, el organizador chicano de la solidaridad internacional, quien actualmente está luchando contra un caso montado en California; Joe Lombardo de la Coalición Nacional Unida Contra la Guerra (UNAC por las siglas en inglés); el Rev. Jesse Jackson, de la

Coalición Rainbow/Push; y representantes de Veteranos de Irak Contra la Guerra.

Después de la manifestación, la gente comenzó a irse a las calles fuera del parque en preparación de la marcha. Sus banderas y pancartas mostraban que la protesta reunía a una amplia coalición de fuerzas que trabajan en cuestiones relacionadas con la brutalidad policial, el medio ambiente, la defensa contra las ejecuciones de hipoteca, solidaridad con Palestina, cuidado de salud, y otras causas importantes.

La Acción Médica de Chicago que ofreció sus servicios del 14 al 21 de mayo, cuidaba a personas a lo largo de la marcha de tres millas. Las Enfermeras Unidas Nacional se unieron a la marcha después de hablar en la manifestación. Dos días antes, miles de enfermeras tuvieron su propia manifestación en Chicago, donde vincularon el presupuesto militar y las ganancias de Wall Street con la falta de cobertura de la salud en Estados Unidos.

Quizás una de las secciones más enérgicas de la marcha fue el contingente antiimperialista, compuesto por BAYAN-USA, la Liga Internacional de la Lucha de los Pueblos, el Partido Workers World/Mundo Obrero, el Centro de Acción Internacional, el Comité de Emergencia de Michigan Contra la Guerra y la Injusticia, Solidaridad Irán y Moratoria Ahora! Coalición para Detener Ejecuciones de Hipoteca, Desalojos y Clausuras de Utilidades, que estaba situado junto a la delegación de solidaridad con Palestina que llevaba la bandera de ese territorio ocupado.

A lo largo de la ruta de la marcha, la policía de Chicago, diputados del alguacil del Condado de Cook, la policía del Estado de Illinois, agentes del FBI, del Servicio Secreto y otros grupos de represión, se alineaban en las aceras. En ciertos puntos, la policía estaba vestida con ropa antidisturbios y llevaba porras.

Muchos policías estaban grabando a los/as manifestantes abiertamente. Pero la gente que estaba en las aceras se unía a la marcha o la aplaudía.

Policía ataca cuando la multitud se dispersa

Cuando la marcha llegó a la Avenida Michigan y la Calle 21, muchas personas empezaron a regresar a sus coches y autobuses. Miembros de Veteranos de Irak Contra la Guerra comenzaron su propia manifestación en la cual simbólicamente devolvieron las medallas que el ejército les había otorgado por sus servicios en Irak y Afganistán.

Este acto de rechazo y desafío recordaba acciones similares llevadas a cabo por Veteranos de Vietnam Contra la Guerra en Washington, D.C., en abril de 1971. Muchos soldados se sintieron traicionados por el gobierno de Estados Unidos y los generales por usarlos para el beneficio de la clase dirigente.

Fue en ese momento que la policía comenzó el ataque a las personas que quedaban. Llegaron autobuses repletos de policías para reforzar a los que estaban en las calles.

Los ataques a los manifestantes fueron sin provocación y obviamente planeados con anterioridad. Los/as manifestantes fueron rodeados, golpeados y arrastrados por las calles. Decenas fueron detenidos y algunos llevados a prisión.

Muchos/as activistas acamparon frente a las comisarías de la policía durante toda la noche esperando saber sobre la suerte de sus amigos y camaradas. Varias personas fueron golpeadas sangrientamente por los policías, quienes deseaban ser violentos con los manifestantes que en su mayoría era joven.

Al día siguiente, el 21 de mayo, una manifestación frente a las oficinas corporativas de la Boeing arremetía contra su papel en la construcción de la máquina de guerra y por no pagar impuestos sobre sus ganancias. El presupuesto militar de EE.UU. ahora supera el de todos los demás países juntos —unos 800 mil millones de dólares. Esta gran riqueza podría utilizarse para proporcionar vivienda, salud, educación y otros servicios esenciales para los/as trabajadores/as, los/as jóvenes y los/as oprimidos/as, quienes crean todo pero a cambio reciben muy poco.

Lanzado el Capítulo estadounidense de la Liga Internacional de la Lucha de los Pueblos

Por Bill Doares
Chicago

Miles de personas llegaron a esta ciudad el fin de semana del 19 y 20 de mayo. Unas eran altos funcionarios, ministros y presidentes. Vinieron a asistir a la cumbre de la Organización del Tratado del Atlántico Norte, una alianza militar de Estados Unidos, Canadá y Europa occidental. Escondiéndose detrás de una presencia masiva de policías fuertemente armados, cenaron y bebieron y tramaron nuevas guerras contra los pueblos pobres de África y Asia.

Otras miles de personas, trabajadores/as y desempleados/as, estudiantes, jubilados/as y veteranos/as militares, llegaron para protestar contra sus planes de guerras interminables y gastos interminables de guerra. También, centenares entre ellas llegaron para asistir a otra reunión cumbre. En su mayoría jóvenes y en su mayoría gente de color, llenaron al Centro Autónomo, un salón comunitario en Albany Park, un barrio mayormente de inmigrantes en Chicago.

El tema de la Asamblea del 19 de mayo era “Únete con el 99% global contra el capital monopólico, fuente de la crisis económica, el racismo y la guerra”. Su propósito era comenzar el capítulo estadounidense de la Liga Internacional de la Lucha de los Pueblos (LILP).

La LILP podría llamarse la anti-OTAN. Une cerca de 400 organizaciones de masa en 43 países de seis continentes. Representa a tra-

bajadores/as, campesinos/as y pescadores/as, estudiantes, indígenas, pobres urbanos/as, ambientalistas, abogados/as y defensores/as de derechos humanos, activistas antiguerra y luchadores/as por la mujer y los derechos homosexuales. Con toda su diversidad, todos/as están unidos en ver al imperialismo, el sistema mundial del capitalismo de monopolio que está centrado en Wall Street, como el principal enemigo de la clase trabajadora y los/as oprimidos/as de todo el mundo.

El capítulo de la LILP de Estados Unidos fue lanzado por 28 organizaciones locales y nacionales. Incluía al Centro de Acción Internacional, la sucursal estadounidense del movimiento de masa filipino Bayan (Nueva Alianza Patriótica), la organización filipina de mujeres, Gabriela y de jóvenes Anakbayan, la Organización Popular para el Progreso, el Movimiento de la Juventud Palestina, el Comité para Poner un Alto a la Represión del FBI, Solidaridad con Irán, Alianza Boricua, el Comité de Michigan de Emergencia Contra la Guerra y la Injusticia y Uniéndonos Contra la Guerra — Chelsea, Massachusetts. El capítulo de EEUU se unirá a otros cuatro capítulos de la LILP en Filipinas, Indonesia, Australia y Canadá.

Reunido/as bajo brillantes murales y carteles, la Asamblea se abrió con un mensaje por Skype del presidente de la Liga, el revolucionario líder filipino exiliado, José María Sisón. Él dijo: “reconocemos la importancia y la urgencia del tema de la Asamblea: ¡Únete con el 99% global contra el capital monopóli-

co, fuente de la crisis económica, el racismo y la guerra”; construyamos un porvenir más brillante que sea nuestro! Ustedes están respondiendo al desafío planteado por el rápido empeoramiento de la crisis del sistema capitalista mundial. Es imperativo que eleven el nivel de su unidad, organización y militancia en consonancia con la lucha antiimperialista y democrática de los pueblos del mundo”.

La bienvenida a la Asamblea fue dada por Fred Hampton Jr., el presidente del Colectivo de Presos por Conciencia del Partido Panteras Negras. Hampton es el hijo del vicepresidente Fred Hampton, del Partido de las Panteras Negras de Illinois, quien fue asesinado en su cama por un escuadrón de muerte de la policía de Chicago el 4 de diciembre de 1969. Hampton colocó a la movilización masiva de la policía de Chicago para aterrorizar a los/as manifestantes anti-OTAN en un contexto histórico. También señaló que el 19 de mayo es el cumpleaños de los héroes de los pueblos, Malcolm X y Ho Chi Minh.

Otros/as oradores/as incluían al veterano activista chicano Carlos Montes, quien fue cofundador de las Boinas Marrones en 1967; Hatem Abudayeh, de la Red de la Comunidad Palestina de Estados Unidos; y la activista antiguerra de Minneapolis, Stefanie Yorek, de la Organización Socialista del Camino para la Libertad/Lucha y Resiste. Abudayeh, Montes y Yorek han sido objeto de redadas y saqueos en sus hogares por el

FBI y sus bienes han sido confiscados. Montes fue acusado falsamente de cometer delitos graves y va a juicio el 20 de junio.

El secretario general de la LILP de Montreal, Malcolm Guy, dio un saludo de solidaridad del capítulo de Canadá. Contó de la heroica huelga de tres meses librada por los/as estudiantes de Quebec y de la ley de emergencia fascista impuesta para intentar reprimir su lucha. El cónsul venezolano José Rodríguez y Espinoza también se dirigió a la Asamblea.

Luego, los/as jóvenes y veteranos/as que llenaron a El Centro comenzaron la principal tarea del día: el lanzamiento del capítulo de Estados Unidos. Durante varias horas de debate aprobaron estatutos, resoluciones y un programa general de acción que puso en claro que la LILP-Estados Unidos será una organización activista que se centrará en las movilizaciones y la educación antiimperialista. Un Comité Coordinador, encabezado por Kuusela Hilo de Bayan EEUU y Bill Doares del Centro de Acción Internacional, fueron elegida/o para implementar el programa del Capítulo.

El 20 de mayo, miembros de la LILP ayudaron a encabezar un contingente de apoyo a la liberación nacional que fue militante y disciplinado en la marcha de 15.000 personas contra la Cumbre de la OTAN en el McCormick Place. Kuusela Hilo de la LILP había copresidido el mitin con Joe Iosbacher del Comité para Poner un Alto a la represión del FBI.